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ABSTRACT

An outgrowth of Project Beginning Equal, this manual was compiled to help adults understand and address issues of sex-role stereotyping that affect children during the crucial first 3 years of life. Sections of the guide are devoted to (1) an overview of the issues in nonsexist childrearing, (2) the history of Project Beginning Equal, (3) advice on using the manual, (4) formats for workshops designed to promote awareness of the issues, (5) reproducible resource materials (provided in both English and Spanish), (6) evaluation tools (in English and Spanish), (7) reference materials, and (8) notes on contributors. Workshop formats, extensively explored, include a workshop series involving four sessions: Exploring One's Sex-Role Attitude, Sex-Role Socialization--Adult Interaction with Infants and Toddlers, Identifying Conflicts and Developing Strategies for Change, Analyzing Toys for Sex and Race Stereotyping, and Follow-up--Continuing to Address Issues of Sex Roles and Young Children. Additional workshops involve a 1-day institute and an overview session. Reproducible materials include definitions and facts about sexism, observation forms, and resource information about toys and books. Reference materials include an annotated list of materials for infant child-care centers and guidelines for choosing books and toys for children. Finally, a statement on homosexuality is given, and research articles for background reading are offered. (BJD)

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A manual about

nonsexist childrearing

for infants and toddlers

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BE BEGINNING EQUAL

THE PROJECT ON NONSEXIST CHILDREARING FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

A joint project of the Women's Action Alliance, Inc.
and the Pre-School Association, Inc.

THIS MANUAL IS MADE POSSIBLE BY A GRANT FROM THE NEW YORK COMMUNITY TRUST

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BEGINNING EQUAL:

A MANUAL ABOUT NONSEXIST CHILDREARING
FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

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1983

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Cover design by Arlys Warfield.

DEDICATION

This manual is dedicated to Jacob Jesse Aaronson, Kwasi Ramón David Maldonado Braxton, Adrián Agustín Colón, Benjamin Daniel Leipzig Scott, and Benjamin Philip Galeota-Sprung - the five babies born to members of the Project BE team and their families during 1982-83. They are our future; may they grow up free from all limiting stereotypes.

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The nine centers who participated in the Needs Assessment helped to form initial ideas and hypotheses. They are: BJ's Kids, Bank Street Family Center, CHAMP Morningside Children's Center, East Harlem Neighborhood Center, Hunts Point Parent-Child Center, New York Foundling Hospital Mother-Child Program, Seton Day Care Center, Union Theological Seminary Day Care Center, and the YWCA of New York City Pregnant Teens and Teen Mother Program (PTTM). We wish to thank them for allowing us to observe and interview in their centers. A special thank you goes to the Union Theological Seminary Day Care Center, which opened its doors to allow photography for the project, provided meeting space, and participated in the Needs Assessment as well.

In all, twenty-four programs participated in the outreach phase of the project. In addition to the nine centers mentioned above, they are: Barnard College Toddler Center; Basic Trust Infant-Toddler Center; Center for Infants and Parents, Teachers College; Children's All-Day School; Chinatown Day Care Center; Family Annex; Urban Family Center, Henry Street Settlement; Infant Care Center, Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services; Infant-Toddler Learning Program; Jones Child Care Agency; MFY Child Care Center; Park Center for Pre-Schoolers; Purple Circle Day Care Center; Red Balloon Day Care Center; Louise Wise Services.

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TOWARD NONSEXIST CHILDREARING: AN OVERVIEW OF THE ISSUES

- Research Findings
- Project Beginning Equal
- Project Goals
- Discussing Sex Roles within a Cultural Context
- Addressing Potential Conflicts
- Conclusion

TOWARD NONSEXIST CHILDREARING:
AN OVERVIEW OF THE ISSUES

Research Findings

Early childhood teachers report that by the time children enter nursery school at age three, girls and boys are already quite thoroughly set in sex-stereotyped patterns in their behavior, their play, their learning styles, their self-concepts, and the ways they respond to adults and to other children. During the past ten years, researchers have been conducting a number of carefully-designed studies of very young children, their parents, and their caregivers in order to explore the ways in which the social experiences of girls and boys differ from birth. This research provides insight into the subtle and complex differences in the way adults relate to young girls and boys - differences that, from the very beginning, start the process of sex-role stereotyping.

An excellent summary of these research findings has been written by Dr. Alice Honig, a nationally recognized leader in infant-toddler care (see Reference Materials section of this manual for a reprint of the complete article). Some of the important research cited by Dr. Honig includes the following:

Girls are cuddled significantly more.

Mothers imitate the vocalizations of girl infants more frequently.

Fathers are particularly critical in directing and channeling the sex typing of the child in the family.

Parents encourage competence in boys, but foster interpersonal expressive skills in girls.

Boys are encouraged to explore and learn about the world around them, while girls are rewarded essentially for remaining dependent and helpless.

Parents are more likely to interrupt a girl than a boy.

Caregivers respond to significantly higher proportions of need/distress and negative behaviors from boys compared to girls.

Honig concludes:

Caregiver and parent differences in treating and responding to male and female children seem to differ from birth onward in ways that reflect what adults believe to be typical or desirable pathways and behaviors for each sex. Some of these differences reflect a bias toward expecting males to be agentic - to be active, decision makers, and achievers - and expecting girls to be nurturant, submissive, and interpersonally sensitive to others. What is needed is a rethinking of the best wishes for human actualization of both sexes.²

Project Beginning Equal

Research findings which point to the different social experiences of very young girls and boys have not been included in the books written for parents on child development, nor have they found their way into textbooks for training early childhood professionals in infant-toddler development and child care. It was not until Beginning Equal: The Project on Nonsexist Childrearing for Infants and Toddlers (Project BE) began that any major effort addressed sex-role stereotyping in the first three years.

Funded for a two-year period, Project BE has been a joint effort of the Non-Sexist Child Development Project of the Women's Action Alliance, Inc., leaders in the field of nonsexist early childhood education; and the Pre-School Association, Inc., a pioneering child-care information resource and advocacy organization serving parents and programs for young children in New York City. The project was funded by the New York Community Trust, which, in 1981, issued a report entitled Girls and Young Women: A Study of Their Status in Today's World.³ The findings of this report led to the creation of a funding priority to reduce the effect of sex-role stereotyping on both boys and girls.

Project BE began exploring the issue of nonsexist child-rearing and caregiving for infants and toddlers in 1982. Starting in the mid-1970s and spurred by the baby boom of the 1980s, there has been a gradual increase in programs for children under three and their parents - in day-care centers, parent-child programs, nursery school classes for two-year-olds, classes for new parents, and programs serving teen parents. This growth in center-based programs for infants and toddlers makes it possible for the first time to work with significant numbers of parents and caregivers of children under three, and it has been this major new trend in child care that has given impetus to Project Beginning Equal.

Project Goals

In her research review, Dr. Honig's final recommendation is that "adults need to do more to help both sexes toward achievement and toward tenderness." The goal of Project Beginning Equal has been to help parents and caregivers do just that.

Toward this end, Project BE has developed workshops and materials that will help adults understand and address issues of sex-role stereotyping that affect children during the crucial first three years of life. Through these workshops and materials, the project seeks to help parents and caregivers:

Discuss learning and development during the first three years of life and the fundamental impact that they, as adults, have on the quality of that process;

evidence understanding of sex-role stereotyping by giving examples from their own lives;

articulate the qualities they want to encourage in all children;

discuss and explore effects of bias due to sex, race, class, or disability on a child's sense of self as well as on her or his future options in this society;

discuss and develop strategies for raising girls and boys in nonsexist ways from birth;

discuss the value of involving both men and women in the process of nonsexist childrearing from birth;

identify and discuss the different ways in which sexism affects female and male adults and children;

compare the differing impact that men and women have on sex-role stereotyping;

discuss the impact of different family structures on sex-role development; for example, single parents, divorced parents, nuclear families, extended families;

identify conflicts arising from dealing with sexism in children's lives and develop strategies for dealing with these conflicts.

Discussing Sex Roles within a Cultural Context

Project BE was designed to reach a broad spectrum of people in regard to age, socioeconomic status, racial/ethnic background, and work experience. To accomplish this, the project brought together specialists working in the areas of infant-toddler development, early childhood education, sex and race equity, community relations, and adolescent parenting to work as a team and to develop strategies in order to address sex-role stereotyping within the context of different dynamics of race, national origin, and class.

This has been an extremely unique aspect of Project BE's work. Very few materials exist to help people address sex roles in a cultural context, and very little research on sex roles has taken into consideration the interconnections of sex, race, and class.

The workshops and materials in this manual focus on sex roles and its damaging effect on all children, but they also contain an awareness that sex roles are manifested in different ways within different cultures. They acknowledge that it is not an easy process to examine one's own upbringing, family, culture, and traditions and admit that changes need to be made. The strategies developed by the Project BE team and presented in this manual will help each person understand the multiple social forces and attitudes that shaped her or his own early socialization and the ways in which these factors affect the socialization of the next generation of children.

Addressing Potential Conflicts

One way to help people deal with conflicts they may have about nonsexist childrearing is to discuss the changes in the social structure, from the past to the present, that call for new approaches to childrearing. For example, the increased number of women in the workforce increases the future options for all young girls. Also, recent information about the cost to males of traditional stereotypes - in terms of heart attacks and emotional detachment from their children - has led to a new understanding of the importance of men being able to express a full range of feelings as well as of father-child relationships. Therefore, training male children to be nurturant and to see nurturance as one aspect of maleness, can be viewed as part of a forward-looking approach to childrearing. (Note: More thorough discussions of these issues and other related issues may be found in the Mini-Lecture on Sex-Role Stereotyping, page 33, the Content Module on Conflicts and Resolutions, page 70, and the Reference Materials section.)

Even while emphasizing the positive aspects of nonsexist childrearing and caregiving, however, there might still be resistance to the ideas. It is important to consider the sources of resistance in terms of the composition of the group. One issue which exemplifies the possible complexities of such a discussion is the question that inevitably arises about the

appropriateness of encouraging doll play among male children. This question is often expressed as concern about a male child becoming a "sissy." Complex factors underlie this concern, and it is important for the workshop leader to attempt to uncover these factors from the participants' perspectives, rather than jumping to conclusions which may be based on her or his own cultural context.

In some cultures, the concern arises from a fear that nonsexist childrearing will disarm male children in environments where they are dealing with a dominant society whose practices may make assertiveness a necessity. Another possibility is that the concern reveals an apprehension that nonsexist childrearing will result in male children becoming homosexuals.

During the development of the Project BE workshops, the members of the team grappled with the question of how to respond to participants' spoken or unspoken fear that eliminating sex roles may cause homosexuality. A statement developed by the team to share with parents and caregivers is included in the Reference Materials section of this manual. When addressing this concern, it is important for workshop leaders to help parents and caregivers understand the differences between three issues that are related to the concept of sex-role stereotyping: gender identity, sexual orientation, and sex roles.

Gender identity is one's self-awareness and acceptance of being female or male.

Sexual orientation is a person's identification of males or females for intimate sexual and emotional relationships.

Sex roles are socially-defined and reinforced attitudes and behaviors considered appropriate for females and males.

As Alice Honig writes:

A little boy may know that he is a boy, and feel comfortable about it, but still enjoy some activities such as playing house or pretending to nurse a doll tenderly, activities which have been considered typically feminine. These activities do not necessarily mean that he does not like being a boy, nor that he is insecure about maleness. In fact, sometimes persons who show extremely sex-stereotypic behavior and seem very uncomfortable about activities considered typical of the other sex may actually be more insecure in their gender identity than others who are less rigid in their beliefs and values about sex-appropriate behaviors.⁴

Conclusion

Project BE is in concert with Dr. Alice Honig's point of view that sex roles are limiting for both girls and boys. Boys are shortchanged primarily in the development of their emotional and nurturant selves, while girls are shortchanged primarily in terms of physical development, concept of self, and training for independence. Through the development of workshops and materials, Project BE seeks to help parents and caregivers understand these limitations and begin at birth to free children from the constrictions of sex-role stereotyping so that each child can grow to the fullest extent of her or his human potential.

Notes

1. Alice Sterling Honig, "Research in Review: Sex Role Socialization in Early Childhood," Young Children, Vol. 38, No. 6, September 1983, pp. 57-70. (A reprint of this article appears in the Reference Materials section of this manual.)
2. Honig, p. 67.
3. Joyce Bove, Megan McLaughlin, and Lorie Slutsky, Girls and Young Women: A Study of Their Status in Today's World (New York Community Trust, 415 Madison Ave., New York NY 10017, 1981).
4. Honig, p. 58.

HISTORY OF BEGINNING EQUAL: THE PROJECT ON
NONSEXIST CHILDREARING FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

- Philosophy
- Outreach
- Needs Assessment
- Materials Development
- Pilot-Testing
- Implementation/Dissemination

HISTORY OF BEGINNING EQUAL:

THE PROJECT ON NONSEXIST CHILDBREARING FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

Philosophy

Beginning Equal: The Project on Nonsexist Childrearing for Infants and Toddlers was the first to address issues of nonsexist childrearing and caregiving for children ages birth to three. Project BE's philosophy of staff development and parent education reflected in this manual is an amalgam of experiences and perspectives brought to the project by individuals who then worked closely together as a team for two years. Basic to this philosophy are the following:

Nonsexist childrearing and caregiving are quality childrearing and caregiving, in that they foster the fullest potential development of each child regardless of his or her sex.

Workshop leaders should be representative of the background of the parents and caregivers in their workshop groups. The BE team was interracial, as were the team members who worked in each center. Team members who were bilingual were always available as needed.

Written materials and hand-outs for workshop participants need to be made available in the preferred language of the group members.

Sensitivity to, respect for, and knowledge about the cultural experiences and traditions of the workshop participants are essential. Essential also is the ability to help workshop groups develop an awareness of attitudes that stereotype members of a cultural group on the basis of sex.

It is necessary to gauge participants' varied levels of understanding of the issues, to reach people at those levels, to present issues in non-threatening ways, and to provide support and follow-up as needed.

Interactive workshops that engage participants in the process of discovery have a greater impact than "talking at people" or merely presenting information.

Potentially controversial issues need to be carefully thought through and an appropriate approach worked out in advance of the workshop sessions.

The two-year span of Project BE was divided into five phases: Outreach, Needs Assessment, Materials Development, Pilot-Testing, and Implementation/Dissemination. The first three phases were completed during 1982; pilot-testing and implementation/dissemination took place throughout 1983.

Outreach

During the outreach a total of twenty-four programs in the New York City area were contacted and visited, including publicly-funded day-care centers, independent day-care centers, both moderately-priced and high-priced parent-child programs, and programs for teenage mothers. The Pre-School Association publicized the project in its Newsletter and reported on the project at meetings of its Infant-Toddler-Twos Network, a resource and support group of center directors and caregivers serving children under three.

The purpose of the outreach was twofold: to inform the New York City child-care community about the project and to identify centers interested in participating in the needs assessment phase of the project. Prior to the outreach effort, criteria for participation were established by the Project BE team, i.e., number of children and staff, diversity of population, established schedule for staff and parent meetings, cost to parents, and interest on the part of the center in the issues the project was addressing. Two members of the Project BE team visited each center, talking at length with the director about the center's program and about Project BE. From the information gathered during these visits, team members selected nine centers for participation in the needs assessment phase. They were:

BJ's Kids - A moderate-cost independent day-care center serving children ages one to four; a center committed to a nonsexist multicultural approach to early childhood education.

Bank Street Family Center - A high-cost infant-toddler center at Bank Street College of Education, serving children from six months through two years of age.

CHAMP Morningside Children's Center - One of eight publicly-funded child-care centers in New York City that serve infants and toddlers.

East Harlem Neighborhood Center - New York Foundling Hospital's parent-child program for single mothers who are considered "at risk," many of them teenagers.

Hunts Point Parent-Child Center - A half-day infant-toddler program serving Hispanic parents and their children ages two months through two years of age.

New York Foundling Hospital Mother-Child Program - A residential maternity shelter program for teenage mothers ages sixteen to eighteen, which includes a child-care component.

Seton Day Care Center - A combined publicly-funded and high-cost independent day-care center serving children from two months through two years of age.

Union Theological Seminary Day Care Center - A moderate-cost center for seminary student families and community families, serving children from nine months through five years of age.

YWCA Teen Mother Program - A New York City Board of Education high school equivalency program for teen mothers and their young children ages two months through two years.

Needs Assessment

The needs assessment phase of Project BE was conducted in two stages: literature review and field observations/interviews. The major purpose of the literature review was to examine the childrearing books directed at parents and caregivers for bias as to sex, race/ethnicity, and disability.¹ While there was not time to do an exhaustive or formally-designed literature review, the reading and reporting done by team members made it clear that:

Most books assume a white, middle-class audience.

There appears to be little awareness of these issues on the part of those offering courses in infant-toddler development.

There is little or no inclusion of children with disabilities in the literature. Disability is by and large dealt with as a special and "medical" issue.

The majority of books give little or no endorsement to center-based care for infants and toddlers.

The field observations and interviews were conducted in order to gather the perspectives of parents, directors, and caregivers on issues of nonsexist childrearing and to learn from direct observation what workshops and materials were needed to create nonsexist environments for infants and toddlers. Pairs of Project BE team members worked in three centers each, making several visits to each site to observe and interview. Since a major purpose of the interview was to explore the varied perspectives of directors, caregivers, and parents regarding

nonsexist childrearing, much care was taken to formulate questions to facilitate this process. Project team members were aware that the way a question is asked and the use of terminology can be crucial in creating an interview that encourages the interviewee to share her/his thoughts and attitudes freely.

When observing very young children, it is neither possible nor desirable to quantify their activities and behaviors in a strictly scientific research mode. An early childhood observer utilizes intuition, empirical data, and common sense to arrive at a qualitative understanding of a program. For the classroom observations, a running record approach, in which an observer followed a particular child's activities and interactions for ten minutes, was used. Special attention was given to children's arrivals and departures in an effort to understand child/parent relationships and how these might differ according to sex.

In all, more than seventy observations were conducted by members of the BE team. In reviewing these observations, patterns began to emerge that led to the formation of several significant questions:²

Are adults more likely to miss the cues or misunderstand the communications of pre-verbal girls than pre-verbal boys? That is, if a boy expresses an interest in an activity or object, are the caregivers more likely to pick up on it?

Are girls complimented on appearance and boys on achievement? And further, are girls' achievements turned into appearance?

Do girls get more verbal responses to their feelings while boys are distracted from them?

Is the exploratory wandering of toddler girls more frequently interrupted than that of boys?

Do caregivers work harder with girls to socialize them and help them to be more responsible than they do with boys?

The observations made during this phase supported existing research findings which document the differential interactions between adults and babies based on gender. These observations were then incorporated into the workshops to raise parents' and caregivers' awareness of the ways in which sex-role stereotyping influences their interactions with children.

Materials Development

Immediately following the completion of the needs assessment, the materials development phase got underway. Project team members worked in committees to design workshop formats, develop content modules, select audio-visual materials, and gather and/or write background pieces and hand-outs for the workshops. Parents and caregivers tested the formats and materials during the pilot-testing phase of the workshops; following this, revisions were made and the materials were incorporated into this manual.

Pilot-Testing

Three sites were selected from the original nine to participate in the pilot-testing of the workshops and materials: BJ's Kids, East Harlem Neighborhood Center, and Hunts Point Parent-Child Center. The pilot-testing, which took place over a four-month period, was launched at each center with a toy workshop. The decision was made to begin with this workshop because the pilot-testing schedule coincided with the winter holiday season. The workshop brought together parents, family members, and center personnel, and focused on choosing toys that are nonsexist and representative of different cultures, as well as being safe, durable, and age-appropriate.

Following the toy workshops, three additional sessions each were held for caregivers and parents at the pilot-testing sites. These sessions were interactive and focused on how sex-role attitudes are formed and how sex-role stereotyping is manifested in the classroom, the home, and the community. Through music, films, small-group discussions, role-playing, and other techniques, participants looked at themselves, at their own early socialization, and at the children in their lives.

Parents and caregivers role-played situations that illustrated sexist adult attitudes and how they were manifested in interactions with children. In more than one center, participants related that girls were kept confined, were dressed in "pretty" clothes that should not get dirty, and were not allowed to play on the floor. Boys, on the other hand, were allowed to explore their environment but not their feelings. Parents reported that from infancy onward, girls were protected while boys were expected to be "little men." During the workshops, caregivers and parents were given an opportunity to explore the origins of these attitudes and their effects on the development of children. Once participants became aware that sex-role stereotyping does indeed limit children under the age of three, they were eager to begin the process of change. In each center, parents and caregivers developed strategies based on the realities of their own life situations.

The pilot sessions were conducted bilingually, as needed, and all materials used as hand-outs at the workshops were available in Spanish and English. (Note: It is recommended that workshop leaders make every effort to offer bilingual sessions,

with bilingual hand-outs, in the preferred language of the participants in all communities where there is such a need.)

Implementation/Dissemination

This manual, based on the pilot-testing, is the centerpiece of the implementation/dissemination phase of Project BE. It is the culmination of the work of the BE team, and the beginning of an ongoing dissemination effort by others. While team members will use the manual to conduct workshops for parents and caregivers for the rest of this project year and individually in their work thereafter, the manual was created to help train others as Beginning Equal workshop leaders. It is designed for use by educational directors and head teachers in infant-toddler-tuos programs, by childbirth educators, other parent educators, and social workers who work with parents of young children under three, educators in undergraduate and graduate programs in early childhood education and child development, as well as all others who are concerned with the needs of children from birth to three and who are committed to helping them grow up free of the limiting effects of sex-role stereotyping.

Notes

1. For an in-depth look at childrearing books, see Merle Froschl and Sandy Weinbaum, "Where Have All the Changes Gone? A Survey of Childrearing Books for Parents and Caregivers," Equal Play, Vol. III, Nos. 3 & 4, Summer-Fall, 1982, pp. 10-19. (A reprint of this article appears in the Reference Materials section of this manual.)
2. For a complete discussion of these questions, see Judy Leipzig, "Questioning Our Behavior When Working with Young Children," Equal Play, Vol. III, Nos. 3 & 4, Summer-Fall, 1982, pp. 7-9. (A reprint of this article appears in the Reference Materials section of this manual.)

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

- Description of Materials
- Keys to Successful Workshops
- How to Prepare for the Workshop

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

Description of Materials

Essential to all good early childhood education is flexibility, and this is also true in leading workshops. Within this manual, you will find all the ingredients needed to conduct workshops on the issues of sex-role stereotyping, while taking into account the differing needs and schedules of parents, caregivers, directors, and others who interact with children under the age of three. In preparing the manual, however, the Project BE team has tried not to turn the ingredients into "cookbook recipes," but to offer models that can readily be adapted to the needs of the particular group of caregivers or parents and to the individual style of various workshop leaders.

The materials presented in the manual are based on the work of Project BE, incorporating the experience gained during the pilot-testing and the collective wisdom of the BE team's diverse backgrounds. These materials have been arranged in a variety of categories: workshop formats, content modules, reproducible materials (in both English and Spanish), evaluation tools (in both English and Spanish), background readings, and resources.

Workshop formats: The principal workshop format (Format A) is a series of four workshops that may be adapted for use with either parents or caregivers. The workshops include: Session I, "Exploring One's Sex-Role Attitudes"; Session II, "Sex-Role Socialization: Adult Interaction with Infants and Toddlers"; Session III, "Identifying Conflicts and Developing Strategies for Change"; and Session IV, "Analyzing Toys for Sex and Race Stereotyping." The toy workshop can be used either as an opening or closing session, and it is equally well suited for separate or mixed groups of parents or caregivers. An optional Follow-Up Session, "Continuing to Address Issues of Sex Roles and Young Children," is also provided.

The structure of each workshop consists of a statement of purpose, an introduction or introductory activity, a list of content modules, timing, evaluation, and hand-outs/assignments. Content modules for use in specific workshops appear immediately after the outline of that workshop. Evaluation forms and hand-outs may be found in separate sections of the manual.

Two other formats suitable for different target populations and shorter time-frames are included. There is an all-day intensive institute for parents, staff, directors, staff developers, etc. (Format B); and a one-and one-half to two-hour overview session suitable for general audiences at conferences or workshops (Format C).

Content modules for use in workshops: The use of content modules, which can be added, expanded, or dropped entirely depending on timing and the needs of the workshop group, provides maximum flexibility. There are fifteen content modules included in this manual. They incorporate a variety of small-group interactive techniques as well as large group discussions and audio-visual materials. Each module includes an introduction,

timing, materials needed, procedure, and discussion points. In two cases, the modules are in the form of mini-lectures which provide background information on sex-role stereotyping and on the importance of play.

Reproducible materials: This section contains two types of reproducible materials. There are task cards for use in the small groups as described in the content modules, and there are hand-outs/assignments for the various sessions. These materials are available in both Spanish and English so that Spanish-speaking or bilingual people can participate in the training in their language of choice. While these are all mentioned in the format and module sections, they are reprinted in this section in order to make it easier for you, as a workshop leader, to make copies for workshop participants. Time has been allocated in each session for an explanation of the hand-outs and assignments. Participants can become anxious if they do not understand an assignment or if they feel rushed.

Evaluation tools: A participant questionnaire, sign-in sheet, and leader evaluation sheet in Spanish and English are included in this section and are suitable for use at each session. These can become important tools in assessing the impact of a particular session and in planning for subsequent ones. A time slot for evaluation is provided in each session, though sometimes you might have to insist that participants take time to complete the form before they leave. Explaining that you need participants' comments to help plan effectively for future sessions is a good way to overcome possible resistance.

Resources: Several kinds of resources are contained in this section. They supply a substantial knowledge base that will prepare you for leading discussions on the subject of sex-role stereotyping during the first three years of life. Included are articles for background reading, an annotated list of resources that are accessible to infant-toddler child-care centers, a bibliography of books for children under three, instructions for hand-made toys and books, and the Project BE statement on homosexuality.

Keys to Successful Workshops

Careful advance planning is essential to the success of all workshops. As the workshop leader, you will be much more secure if you know you have covered all contingencies. Not that the unexpected won't occur anyway - but at least you will know you tried! The following guidelines will help you plan your workshop sessions in terms of scheduling, group size, timing and pacing, room arrangements, and supplies.

Scheduling: Workshops should be scheduled at a time that is natural for caregivers and/or parents to meet, i.e., regularly-scheduled staff meetings for caregivers and pick-up time for parents. Participants will be more relaxed and receptive if they are not forced into unusual or inconvenient schedules.

Given the sensitive nature of these discussions, this becomes especially important. Also, when parents meet in the early evening, child care and a light supper should be made available, if at all possible. Parents are much more likely to attend the workshops if they do not have to go home first, cook dinner, put children to bed, get a baby sitter, and then come back to the center.

Group size: Because of the interactive style and the sensitive and personal nature of the workshops, groups of not larger than fifteen to twenty people are recommended. Small-group activities work best when they involve two to six participants. If your group is larger than twenty people, it is better to give more than one group the same task, rather than increase the size of the small groups. Also, if there are more than twenty participants, you should definitely plan to work with a co-leader and split the large group discussions into two segments, with each leader facilitating one group.

Timing and pacing: Timing and pacing are key elements in planning a successful workshop. Each workshop in this manual is planned for a two-hour time span. Two hours allows for full discussions, but is not so long that participants become restless. Each content module to be used within a two-hour workshop contains suggestions for timing; however, you will have to use your own judgment and pace the workshop according to participants' responses. Only the people conducting a workshop can decide if it is better to let one discussion run over, cut another one short, or eliminate a segment altogether because the participants are so involved in a particular activity that it should not be interrupted.

As a rule of thumb, it is better to overplan rather than underplan a session. That way, if one segment doesn't use up the allotted time, you will have another activity ready. Be sure to allow time at the beginning of each session for a short introduction, as well as time at the end for summary, evaluation, and hand-outs/assignments.

Room arrangement/workshop environment: While it is not usually possible to select a perfect workshop site, it is possible to arrange most rooms to allow for maximum participant interaction. The workshops call for a variety of small-group and whole-group activities, so movable chairs are a must. Tables for writing activities are helpful, but not essential. Do, however, always try to have one table for materials and supplies. Also, most sessions require newsprint or a blackboard which should be easily visible to all participants.

If you are not familiar with the site, try to visit before the workshop, or at least call ahead and ask for a detailed description of the room. Find out about:

- room size
- electrical outlets
- window shades (needed to darken the room for viewing films)
- film screen (is there one built in?)
- noise level
- chairs, tables
- blackboard/chalk
- easel or wall for mounting newsprint

It is worth the time and effort to do some rearranging of the room if you think it will improve the workshop environment. Also, small touches like simple refreshments, clip boards, extra pens and pencils all help to make participants feel welcome and supported during the workshop.

Supplies: Simple as it may seem, assembling the necessary supplies ahead of time can make a workshop go much more smoothly and will help to avoid last-minute anxieties. While the specific materials needed are listed within each module, here is a list of general supplies that every workshop leader should have handy:

- scissors
- rubber bands
- push pins
- masking tape
- extension cord
- markers
- extra pens/pencils/paper (for participants)
- take-up reel (for film projector)

How to Prepare for the Workshop

Begin by familiarizing yourself with the entire manual to get an overall picture of the workshop designs. Make note of the films and other materials you will need, and preview them well in advance. Prior to each session, re-read the workshop outline and the recommended content modules, and make any adaptations that you feel are necessary. Reproduce the materials you will need for each session, gather supplies, and be sure to call ahead if you are unfamiliar with the workshop site.

In addition to the information provided in the workshop outlines and content modules, you will need to prepare your own introduction to each session. This introduction can be brief, but it needs to be carefully thought out in advance, since it will set the tone for the session or for the whole series. Your own experiences and thoughts on the topic of sex-role stereotyping should be included, as well as something that relates the topic to the participants. Many parts of this manual may also be helpful, e.g. research findings, background readings, or general information about Project Beginning Equal.

As with the introduction, you also will need to summarize each session in your own words. How you do this will depend on how the workshop has gone and what you feel would be an appropriate way to end each session. It is always useful to briefly summarize the key discussion points and, if you are conducting the whole series, to tie the present session to the previous one.

For the pilot-testing, the Project BE team developed the following series of questions that helped to provide participants with an overview of the purpose of the workshop series. They proved to be extremely effective in introducing the workshops and in summing them up as well.

For Parents:

As women, what are our expectations for ourselves?
As men, what are our expectations for ourselves?

What are some of the reasons for these expectations?

What do we envision for our children in the future as females and males?

What sex-role stereotypes stand in the way when we think about their futures?

What can we as parents do to improve our interactions with our children?

How can we help our children deal with sex-role pressures from the larger society?

For Caregivers:

What do we envision for children in the future as females and males?

What sex-role stereotypes stand in the way when we think about their futures?

What can we as caregivers do to improve our interactions with children?

How can we help children deal with sex-role pressures from the larger society?

How can we help parents deal with those same pressures?

As you read this manual and use it in your work, feel free to add to it, delete from it, and adapt it so that it suits your personal style and works effectively for your particular group. The most important consideration, however, is to seize every opportunity to bring the issue of nonsexist childrearing and caregiving to parents and caregivers.

WORKSHOP FORMATS

FORMAT A: WORKSHOP SERIES

Session I: Exploring One's Sex-Role Attitudes

Workshop Outline
Content Modules for Session I
Optional Content Modules for Session I

Session II: Sex-Role Socialization - Adult Interaction with Infants and Toddlers

Workshop Outline
Content Modules for Session II

Session III: Identifying Conflicts and Developing Strategies for Change

Workshop Outline
Content Modules for Session III

Session IV: Analyzing Toys for Sex and Race Stereotyping

Workshop Outline
Content Modules for Session IV

Follow-up Session (Optional): Continuing to Address Issues of Sex Roles and Young Children

Workshop Outline

FORMAT B: ONE-DAY INSTITUTE

One-Day Institute: Do Children Begin Equal? A Mini-Course Exploring Sex-Role Stereotyping During the First Three Years

Workshop Outline
Content Module for One-Day Institute

FORMAT C: OVERVIEW SESSION

Overview Session: The Pink and Blue Syndrome - Sex-Role Stereotyping During the First Three Years

SESSION I: EXPLORING ONE'S SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Purpose

This workshop will provide an introduction to the issue of sex-role stereotyping. It will help participants explore their attitudes about sex-roles and understand how these attitudes were formed. At the end of the workshop, participants will generate a list of qualities to foster in all children. This activity will help them think about how to raise the next generation of children unhampered by stereotyped views of gender roles. This generated list of qualities will provide continuity throughout the series of workshops; participants can refer to the list during subsequent sessions, change it, add to it, and take home a copy for future reference.

Introductory Activity (5-10 minutes)

Have participants introduce themselves and share some information about their children, their work, or their interest in the topic.

Content Modules (see page 33)

Mini-Lecture: Sex-Role Stereotyping (15 minutes)

"Happy to Be Me": A Film Exploring Sex-Role Attitudes
(60 minutes)

Exploring Sex-Role Attitudes (An alternative module, if
the "Happy to Be Me" film is not available) (60 minutes)

Generating a List of Qualities to Foster in All
Children (30 minutes)

Evaluation (see Evaluation Tools section)

Questionnaire (10 minutes)

Hand-outs/Assignment (see Reproducible Materials section)

Depending on the group, select one of the following hand-outs to assign for discussion at the beginning of the next session. Give out the other hand-outs as well, so that participants can begin to develop resources on the topic.

Definitions of Sexism

What Are the Facts?

Exploring Sex-Role Attitudes Questionnaire

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION I:

MINI-LECTURE: SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING

The Important First Three Years

During the first three years of life, children are beginning to learn how the world works and where they fit in relation to it. They are developing skills and interests. They are acquiring a basic self-image that they will have for the rest of their lives.

Clearly, these are important years - ones in which all children need and deserve the care and opportunities which will help them develop into healthy adults. Nonsexist childrearing is synonymous with this kind of approach: it means providing young children with the experiences that will help them develop to the best of their individual abilities, not according to a preconceived societal notion of what is "appropriate."

Where Does Sex-Role Stereotyping Begin?

Studies show us that there are no substantiated gender differences in behavior at birth,¹ but there are clear differences in behavior at the preschool level. What this means is that something important happens in the first three years of life to sex-stereotype children in their behaviors and interactions with the world.

From the time children come into the world, and even before, our society has definite ideas and images of how they will behave and what they can become, based on their sex. We expect boys to be rougher and hardier because that is the image of a "real man" in our culture. This stereotype continues despite the fact that fewer boys survive birth and infancy than girls.² We expect girls to be soft and feminine, though during infancy and beyond, it is often difficult to distinguish between the sexes without such cues as barrettes and earrings and pinks and pastels.

These cues are important, however, since they trigger "appropriate" responses from adults. The current research on adult-child interaction concludes that adults have different ways of handling girls and boys. In addition, adults interpret babies' attributes, communications, and interests according to gender, even when objective measurement shows no difference between boys and girls.³

Thus, girls and boys begin receiving very different messages from birth. For girls, it is that they are expected to respond to others' wishes instead of their own, and, from a very early age, they begin to develop a sense of passivity in terms of not being able to control their own destiny. Boys, on the other hand, receive more general stimulation, are allowed much more physical freedom, and are encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy. They are discouraged, however, from developing emotional and nurturant qualities.

As children grow older, gender becomes a powerful weapon for approving or disapproving of behavior. How many times have you heard a boy told that he throws "like a girl?" Such a statement

is meant as an insult. A girl who is physically competent and handles herself well in sports is called a "tomboy." Again, the insult is clear, though it is taken less seriously than the one against the boy.

These images are out of step with the changing world that children are being born into today. Yet many such images continue to exist within the different cultures that constitute the United States population. For example, in Puerto Rican culture, a man who fathers only girls is called a chancletero, literally, an old shoe, suggesting that he is worn out, stepped on, not good for much. And in Jewish culture, Orthodox men recite this prayer daily: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord Our God, King of the Universe, Who has not made me a woman." Because these are just a few of the ideas and images ingrained in American society, we must work especially hard to be aware of them and their harmful effect on our children's efforts to cope with the demands of the present world.

Where Does It All End?

We are becoming increasingly aware of the cost of the masculine stereotype. It shows itself in higher incidents of stress diseases in men.⁴ Shorter life expectancy, ulcers, heart disease, hypertension, all can be traced to the suppression of emotions that is seen as a part of fulfilling the male role. It is difficult for men to express love, tenderness, hurt, or sorrow openly and freely.

The effect of the female stereotype on women is especially harmful if we look at the reality of life for the majority of women in the United States today. Ninety percent of all American women will work outside the home for pay at some time in their lives, even if they marry. For this work, women have been trained in those areas which the culture considers as being most suited to women's "nature": waitressing, nursing, teaching, selling. These jobs are not well-paid, especially when compared to the jobs in which men dominate. The result is that women earn 59¢ for every dollar men earn; if part-time work is included, women earn 33¢ for every dollar men make.⁵ More and more women are heads of households and, thus, are responsible for their own and their children's support. Census Bureau figures reveal that between 1981 and 1982, 182,000 female-headed families fell into poverty. At present, 36.3 percent of female-headed families are poor.⁶ For Black female-headed families the situation is even more grim: 56.2 percent live in poverty. More than seven out of ten Black and Hispanic children living in female-headed families are poor.

Exploring One's Own Early Socialization

As adults in the United States today, we have all been shaped by sex-role stereotyping. Depending on our race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, that stereotyping has affected us in different ways, but we all have internalized many stereotyped images and attributes about sex roles. We bring these stereotypes to our own children and those in our care. In order to break down the process of sex-role stereotyping, it is necessary to examine our own attitudes and their effect on us as women and men and as parents and caregivers.

Notes

1. J. Kagan, "Psychology of Sex Differences" in F. Beach, ed. Human Sexuality (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), as reported in Letty Cottin Pogrebin, Growing Up Free: Raising Your Child in the 80's (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980), p.130.
2. N.E. Williamson, "Boys and Girls? Parents' Preferences and Sex Control," Population Bulletin, January 1978, 4, as reported in Pogrebin, Growing Up Free, p.86.
3. J.Z. Rubin, J.J. Provenzano, Z. Luria, "The Eye of the Beholder: Parents' Views on Sex of Newborns," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1974, 44, 512-519, as reported in Pogrebin, Growing Up Free, p. 123.
4. I. Waldron, "Why Do Women Live Longer Than Men?" Journal of Human Stress, Vol. 2, 1976, pp. 1-13, as reported in David and Myra Sadker, "The Report Card: The Cost of Sex Bias in Schools" (The Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity, The American University, Washington, DC, n.d.).
5. David and Myra Sadker, "The Report Card: The Cost of Sex Bias in Schools" (The Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity, The American University, Washington, DC, n.d.).
6. CDF Reports, Vol. 5, No. 8, October 1983 (Children's Defense Fund, 122 C Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001).

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION I:

"HAPPY TO BE ME": A FILM EXPLORING SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

Introduction

"Happy to Be Me" is a documentary film based on a survey of more than six hundred students (K-12) in New York City's Public School District Eleven who represent a wide range of socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. With candid interviews and spontaneous scenes of young people interacting at school, at play, and in the community, this delightful film provides an objective view of young people's attitudes toward female and male roles. It is an entertaining, nonthreatening introduction to the subject, and it helps to create an awareness of one's own attitudes toward sex roles. It also will help participants to understand the limitations of sex-role stereotyping and will encourage a flexible, open-minded attitude toward gender.

Some of the questions discussed in the film include:

Do you like being a girl/boy?

What is the difference between boys and girls?

Do you plan to get married?

In a household, who should be responsible for providing the income?

What do you think of men staying at home and taking care of the house and children while the wife goes out to work?

Is it okay for men to cry?

What traits or characteristics would you like to see in your daughter? And your son?

The film comes with a guide that details the results of the survey and suggests topics for study and discussion.

Time

60 minutes (25-minute film, plus discussion)

Materials Needed

- "Happy to Be Me"
(Available for rental or purchase from:
Arthur Mokin Productions, Inc.
2900 McBride Lane, Santa Rosa, CA 95401)
- 16mm film projector
- screen
- multiple copies of the survey which comes with the
film (estimate quantity needed for the group)

Procedure

Show the film; afterwards, lead a whole group discussion in response to it. As a follow-up, distribute copies of the survey for participants to take home and give to family members.

Discussion

The film is so lively that, in most cases, it will generate its own response from the audience. If discussion is slow in getting started, you can begin by asking participants which attitudes expressed in the film generated their agreement or disagreement. Some key questions to ask during the discussion include:

Were there significant differences between male and female responses?

What appeared to be the most influential factor in determining attitudes - age, sex, other?

How does society enforce sex roles?

Has seeing the film changed any of your ideas about female and male roles?

Did you notice any sex bias on the part of the interviewer or the survey itself?

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION I:

EXPLORING SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES (ALTERNATIVE MODULE)

PART I: WARM-UP

Introduction

The "Boy Meets Girl" excerpt from the record Free to Be You and Me, in which Mel Brooks and Marlo Thomas portray two newborns talking in a hospital nursery, provides a humorous introduction to the subject of sex-role attitudes. It also is a good way to "warmup" the group and get them talking about the issues in a nonthreatening way.

Time

15 minutes

Materials Needed

- Free to Be You and Me record/Arista Records
(Available in record stores, children's stores, libraries, or from Ms. Foundation, 370 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.)
- Record player
- Newsprint, markers, and masking tape or blackboard and chalk

Procedure

Play the "Boy Meets Girl" excerpt from the Free to Be You and Me record and ask participants to listen for the assumptions about sex roles that are expressed. You might have to play the excerpt twice, since the first time participants may just want to enjoy the humor. As the discussion progresses, make a list on newsprint or the blackboard of sex-role assumptions for girls and one for boys.

Discussion

Some of the sex-role assumptions in "Boy Meets Girl" are expressed in obvious statements such as:

Boys are strong/Girls are dainty.

Boys are impatient/Girls are patient.

Boys are brave/Girls are scared.

Boys grow up to be firefighters/Girls grow up to be cocktail waitresses.

It is important, however, to try to get participants to see the more subtle, underlying assumptions behind such statements as they translate into adult behavior. For example:

Men are active/Women are passive.

Men are aggressive/Women are compliant.

Men work/Women stay at home.

Men are not nurturing/Women are nurturers.

The overriding assumption is that boys and girls will grow up to be different, to do different things, to earn different amounts of money, to have different expectations.

PART II: ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

The use of this questionnaire, in which people are asked to agree or disagree with statements about sex roles, will help participants explore their own attitudes about these issues. It is important for participants to realize that, in our society, everyone has been raised in sex-stereotyped ways. It is necessary to get in touch with our own socialization and resultant attitudes before we can begin to question that process for our children.

Time

45 minutes

Materials Needed

- Task cards
- Multiple copies of the sex-role attitudes questionnaire

(Task cards and questionnaire appear in the Reproducible Materials section.)

Procedure

Form small groups, giving each group a task card containing three statements about sex roles (see below). Ask the group to discuss each statement and present agreeing and disagreeing opinions to the larger group, as in a debate. Allow approximately fifteen minutes for the small group activity, and thirty minutes for the larger discussion. Once the whole group discussion is over, give each participant a copy of the entire sex-role attitudes questionnaire, explaining that it is for them to take by themselves, in order to become better aware of their own attitudes about sex roles.

TASK CARD I

It is more important for a boy to continue education or training after high school than for a girl.

There is something wrong with a girl who wants to wear boys' clothes all the time.

Girls are more emotional than boys.

TASK CARD II

Taking care of babies is women's work.

Girls need less freedom than boys.

Boys of any age are physically stronger than girls.

TASK CARD III

Boys should be given more physical education opportunities than girls.

There is something wrong with a boy who wants to play with dolls.

Girls should be disciplined more leniently than boys.

TASK CARD IV

Girls are not as good as boys in math and science.

Girls need more protection than boys.

Boys are naturally more independent than girls.

Discussion

During the discussion of these statements, it is important for the trainer not to make judgments about attitudes expressed by participants. If a controversial statement is made, turn it back to the group by asking questions, such as: "How does the group feel about that?" or "Has this been the general experience of the group?" Several key points that should be made during this discussion follow:

Limited educational options and traditional career counseling place restraints on the earning power of adult women. On the average, women who work full time earn 59¢ for every \$1 earned by men. Nearly 80% of women in the workforce are in clerical, sales, services, or factory jobs.¹

Boys are not allowed to express emotions fully; they are expected to "hold back" when they are physically hurt or emotionally upset, because displaying feelings is considered a "feminine" trait. As a result, adult males have difficulty in developing relationships and in being warm and loving men and fathers.

Fathers, and men generally, often feel incompetent handling infants, but this is due mostly to lack of experience. From infancy on, girls are encouraged while boys are discouraged from the type of play which prepares them for nurturing.

While most men might be bigger and stronger than most women, this is largely irrelevant to everyday life in the twentieth century. At any age, some women will be stronger than some men, and, in many cases, girls and women have not been encouraged to develop their full physical strength.

Both girls and boys should be encouraged to be strong and to be fully physically developed. Sports offers essential basic benefits to the middle childhood years and beyond into adulthood; these benefits are as important as toy play for the early childhood years.

Society's stereotypic view is that women "innately" lack the talent to be good in math and science. Yet research reveals that, through elementary school, girls are just as able as boys in math and science.² Girls lose interest and motivation in math, however, as they progress to junior and senior high school, and thus screen themselves out of many educational and career options through inadequate math training.

Boys receive much more independence training from infancy onward. They are allowed to wander more freely, are given more opportunity to explore their environment, and are not controlled as closely as girls.

Notes

1. Statistics from U.S. Dept. of Labor and Commerce, September 1978, as reported in "An Overview of Women in the Workforce" (National Commission on Working Women, Center for Women and Work, Washington, DC, n.d.).

2. John Ernst, Mathematics and Sex (University of California at Santa Barbara, 1976), as reported in Pogrebin, Growing Up Free, p. 496.

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION I:

GENERATING A LIST OF QUALITIES TO FOSTER IN ALL CHILDREN

Introduction

The purpose of this module is to help participants formulate a list of qualities that they think are important for all children to have, regardless of whether the children are girls or boys. By generating such a list, participants will be helped to understand that "assigning" certain attributes to boys, and others to girls, robs each child of important qualities for her or his development as a competent and caring adult. It is important for the group to have a common understanding of what is meant by qualities that are "good for all children." While many people inherently know what they think are important qualities for children, most have not had the opportunity to articulate and discuss their ideas. This group process will further such an exploration.

Time

30 minutes

Materials Needed

- Newsprint, markers, and masking tape or blackboard and chalk

Procedure

Ask participants to brainstorm a list of qualities they feel are important for all children to have. Write down each quality on the newsprint or blackboard as it is mentioned. If there seems to be some confusion or disagreement, have the person clarify what was meant and come to a group consensus on the quality before writing it down. Arrange to have the list remain posted so that people can add to it. In any case, be sure to make a copy of the list so that participants can go over it again at a later workshop. Suggest that participants also copy the list for themselves, so they may refer to it at anytime. In case the group is slow to start, you might be prepared with a list of qualities to begin the discussion. A sample list might look like this:

Qualities to Encourage in All Children

- independence
- responsibility
- sense of humor
- creativity
- being comfortable with one's own body
- ability to express feelings
- self-confidence
- adventurousness

Discussion

After approximately five to ten minutes of brainstorming, ask participants to go over the list and add anything they feel is missing. Once the group is satisfied with the list, ask them to select three or four items and discuss what specific things need to be done - either at home, or in the day-care environment - to foster these qualities. For example: dressing children in appropriate and sturdy playclothes so they can explore their environment and be adventurous; or encouraging children to express a full range of emotions in order for them to develop the capability of expressing feelings.

Alternative Procedure

An alternative procedure for generating a qualities list with an all-parent group would be to divide into smaller groups of parents with same-sex children. Since some people might have difficulty in brainstorming qualities, these smaller groups should remain fairly large - at least five or more persons. Ask each group to make lists of the qualities they would like to see their children develop as they grow up. Allow approximately five to ten minutes for the small group activity, and then have each group report their list to the whole group. Compile a list of qualities for the groups with male children and for the groups with female children. Compare the two lists and discuss similarities and differences. Ask parents of girls if there are any qualities on the boys' list that they would also want for their children; and ask the same of boys vis-a-vis the girls' list. At the end of the discussion, have the group reach a consensus concerning which qualities from both lists they would agree to merge on a master list of qualities to be encouraged in all children.

SESSION I: OPTIONAL CONTENT MODULES

Note Concerning Optional Content Modules

If the schedule permits or if there are special considerations, there are other modules that can be used to extend the discussion of one's own socialization. Special considerations might include working with teen parents, participants' lack of familiarity with the topic of sex-role stereotyping, or special interest in the media. These modules will help participants become aware of the ways in which their own self-images have been influenced by the media.

Content Modules (see next page)

Listening for Sex-Stereotyped Messages in Popular Songs
(30-45 minutes)

"Killing Us Softly: Advertising's Image of Women" (60 minutes)

Advertisements (30-40 minutes)

Optional content modules developed by Jamila Gastón-Colón and
Walteen Grady for Beginning Equal: The Project on Nonsexist
Childrearing for Infants and Toddlers

OPTIONAL CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION I:

LISTENING FOR SEX-STEREOTYPED MESSAGES IN POPULAR SONGS

Introduction

This module uses popular music as a means of raising participants' awareness about how sex-stereotyped messages permeate our culture. As participants carefully analyze and contrast sexist and nonsexist lyrics, they will begin to understand how their own self-images are shaped by these messages.

Time

45 minutes

Materials Needed

- Sheets of newsprint with the lyrics of one sexist and one nonsexist song printed on them
- Records or tapes of these songs
- Record player or tape recorder
- Additional sheets of blank newsprint, markers, and masking tape or blackboard and chalk

Procedure

Select one clearly sexist song that is popular in the community of the participant group. Since these songs abound, especially ones where women are sex objects, there should be no trouble finding one. Also, select one clearly nonsexist song. This, unfortunately, will not be so easy to find, and you may have to select an older (but wonderful) song such as Helen Reddy's "I Am Woman" (Capitol Records, 1972) or one that is relatively unknown, such as Joan Armatrading's "Me Myself and I" (A&M Records, 1978).

[Note: You will need to be sensitive to the special needs of participants in making the selections. For example, if the group is primarily white, do not choose sexist songs by Black vocal groups. Participants may misinterpret the message to mean, "Only Black vocalists sing sexist songs."]

Before the workshop, write the lyrics for each of the songs on a separate piece of newsprint. Write large enough so that they can be read from any part of the room. During the workshop, keep each sheet concealed until after the participants have had a chance to hear and react to the music for that particular song.

Begin the activity by playing the sexist song. Ask the group to concentrate on the music and when it is over, ask them how it made them feel. For example:

Did they like the beat?

Did the music make them want to snap their fingers, tap their toes, etc.?

Did anyone happen to listen to any of the words?

Now, display the lyrics and play the song again. This time ask participants to concentrate on the words.

Discussion

Lead participants in a discussion of their initial reactions to the music and their secondary reactions to concentrating on the words. As they share their ideas, make a list of the characteristics of women and men they identify in the song. To facilitate the discussion, ask questions such as:

What kinds of women will girls who listen to such songs imagine?

What kinds of values does this song promote?

What messages are boys getting?

Why are anti-women songs so popular?

Who controls the music business?

Now, follow the same procedure with the nonsexist song. Ask the participants to compare the characteristics on both lists and to think about:

Which characteristics would they like to help their daughters to develop?

Will their sons be able to develop into men who would enjoy being with women who have characteristics such as independence, strength, self-confidence?

OPTIONAL CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION I:

"KILLING US SOFTLY: ADVERTISING'S IMAGE OF WOMEN"

Introduction

"Killing Us Softly: Advertising's Image of Women" examines sex-role stereotyping in print advertising. The film uses hundreds of ads from magazines, newspapers, album covers, and storefront windows and offers a concise but powerful analysis of how the advertising industry helps to shape and perpetuate stereotyped images of women. As part of this module, participants will view the film and discuss its messages.

Time

60 minutes (25 minutes for film, plus discussion)

Materials Needed

- Film, "Killing Us Softly" (Available for rental or purchase from: Cambridge Documentary Films, P.O. Box 385, Cambridge, MA 02139)
- Film projector (16mm, sound)
- Screen

Procedure

Be sure to preview the film before you show it to participants. Since the first few minutes show the narrator lecturing to a college audience, you may decide to show only the part that deals directly with the ads, thereby cutting the viewing time by five to ten minutes.

When you introduce the film, prepare participants for the fact that the film is very powerful in the ways in which it documents how sexist and racist messages permeate the field of advertising. Also, if you start the film after the opening lecture, you will need to provide your own introduction.

Show the film and then lead participants in a discussion.

Discussion

Several key points should emerge from the group; for example:

Media influences the self-image of women, mostly in negative ways.

People's attitudes and behaviors are strongly influenced by media messages.

Sexist messages also can be racist.

Women and minorities generally are not in positions of control and power in media organizations.

Sexist and racist media messages permeate the entire society.

There are some nonsexist, nonracist alternatives available in all forms of media.

It is important to become aware, so that we can seek out these alternatives whenever possible.

The more aware we become, the more likely we will be able to counteract the negative effects of media on our children.

OPTIONAL CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION I:

ADVERTISEMENTS

Introduction

If it is not possible to obtain the film, "Killing Us Softly," used in the preceding module, participants may have a hands-on, small group experience analyzing examples of sexist and racist print advertising. This activity may also be used to supplement the film and underscore its messages.

Time

30-40 minutes

Materials Needed

- o Examples of sexist/racist and nonsexist/nonracist magazine advertisements

Procedure

Prepare packets of sexist and nonsexist advertisements. You will need three to four examples in each category for each small group. Be sure to select ads from a variety of publications including magazines that are targeted towards Black and Hispanic audiences. Liquor, perfume, underwear, and cosmetic ads abound with sexist messages, but so do family ads (insurance, cleaning products, and foods), so be sure to include these as well. It is often possible to find nonsexist ads in the same publications, but it is not nearly as easy as it is to find sexist ones. Break into small groups, and ask each group to discuss why their ads are sexist/racist or nonsexist/nonracist.

Discussion

As the groups report back, ask them to select one example from each category to report on in-depth and to just go over the other ads quickly for the whole group. Otherwise, the discussion will get too lengthy. Ask participants to identify qualities that make an ad nonsexist and/or nonracist. Use the discussion list in the preceding module ("Killing Us Softly") to help identify key points that should emerge from the group.

SESSION II: SEX-ROLE SOCIALIZATION - ADULT INTERACTION
WITH INFANTS AND TODDLERS

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Purpose

This workshop begins by helping participants focus on the differing societal expectations for girls and boys. It moves on to explore how parents and caregivers can interact with children to either reinforce or mitigate the effects of sex-role stereotyping.

Introductory Activity (15 minutes)

Lead participants in a discussion of the hand-out distributed at the end of the previous session (refer back to page 32 for this list of hand-outs).

Center Modules (see next page)

Analyzing Baby Congratulations Cards for Sex-Stereotyped Messages (30 minutes)

Exploring Childrearing/Caregiving Situations for Gender Differences (45-60 minutes)

Closing Activity (5-10 minutes)

Review "Qualities List" from previous session. Add or revise as needed.

Evaluation (see Evaluation Tools section)

Questionnaire (10 minutes)

Hand-Outs/Assignment (see Reproducible Materials section)

Observation Checklist

Parents' Observation Sheet

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION II:

ANALYZING BABY CONGRATULATIONS CARDS FOR
SEX-STEREOTYPED MESSAGES

Introduction

Baby congratulations cards have much to tell us about society's attitudes and expectations concerning girls and boys. As adults, our interactions with children are based on these attitudes and expectations.

This module provides a lively and provocative way to help participants understand that sex-stereotyped messages are expressed from the moment of birth, even through a seemingly innocuous vehicle as baby congratulations cards.

The point of the exercise is not whether or not participants "like" the baby cards, but what messages the cards convey about male and female sex roles. Both the blatant and subtle language in the cards provide rich material for discussion.

Time

30 minutes

Materials Needed

- 5 baby congratulations cards specifically for girls
- 5 baby congratulations cards specifically for boys
- 2 nonsexist cards
- Newsprint, markers, and masking tape or blackboard and chalk

Most card stores have "matching" cards for girls and boys. The girls' cards are most often pink, the boys' blue. The format is the same, but the messages are very sex-stereotyped. Also, if you look carefully, you can usually find several nonsexist cards among the traditional ones. These cards do not make assumptions about girl and boy babies, but rather welcome the newborn child. If you cannot find nonsexist cards in your local store, you can easily make some. Choose a picture of a teddy bear, baby toys, baby animals, or a baby that has no "clues" as to its gender (baby pictures supply an opportunity for making multiracial cards as well). Paste the pictures on a piece of construction paper or oaktag with a simple message like "Welcome Baby" or "Congratulations." Use primary or unusual colors rather than the traditional pastels.

Procedure

Have participants form small groups. Give each group one girl and one boy card. Save the nonsexist cards for the whole group discussion. Ask each small group to read their cards aloud and discuss the implications of the message each card conveys for girls and boys, i.e., what each card says about what a "girl should be like" or what a "boy should be like." Allow about ten minutes for small group discussion.

Prepare headings on the newsprint or blackboard in the following way:

Traditional Ideas

Girls

Boys

As each group reports back, list their girl/boy messages in the appropriate column. Here are some typical phrases which appear on baby congratulations cards:

Girl Card

-----If she grows dearer every minute and fills
your thoughts with joy the whole day through
-----If she grows faster than you could imagine but
always stays a "little girl" to you

Boy Card

-----If he's forever asking lots of questions and
bringing home the treasures he has found
-----If he encounters puddles in his pathway and
stomps right through instead of going around

Transferred onto the list, they might look like this:

Traditional Ideas

Girls

Always a "little girl"
cute
precious
dependent

Boys

adventurous
active
curious
intelligent
independent
outdoors

Discussion

Ask each reporter to begin by reading the cards aloud to the whole group and then sharing the messages that her/his group extracted from the cards. Allow time after each report for additional ideas from the larger group. If you think that a key point has been missed, try to ask a question that will elicit it from the group. If there is no response, feel free to make the point directly.

The following are some key points that typically emerge from the cards:

Girls are confined to indoor spaces while boys are depicted exploring the outdoors.

Girls are involved with tea sets, dolls, and flowers. Boys are involved with frogs, bugs, and rocks.

Girls are always "little girls"; they never grow up. Boys are depicted as "little men."

Boys are mischievous, adventurous, and troublesome - but fun! Girls are sometimes a little mischievous, but not troublesome. They are sweet, coy, and precious - but not fun.

The same words are often used in girl cards and boy cards, but they are used in ways that convey very different meanings, i.e., girls are "teases," but boys tease.

You will probably find that the boys' list is longer and more varied than the girls', attesting to the fact that even as a newborn the boy is expected to do more. Neither list, however, contains the variety of characteristics that make up a well-rounded person.

Proceed with the report-out and continue adding to the lists until each group has been heard. Then, offer participants an alternative to the traditional, stereotyped cards by reading the nonsexist cards aloud. Allow a short time for discussion of these cards, and stress that it is possible to choose or to make alternative cards that do not stereotype children. As a summary to the activity, have participants review the lists and the implications of the cards' messages.

Developed by Merle Froschl and Barbara Sprung for Beginning Equal:
The Project on Nonsexist Childrearing for Infants and Toddlers

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION II:

EXPLORING CHILDREARING/CAREGIVING SITUATIONS FOR GENDER DIFFERENCES

Introduction

Research shows us that adults interpret babies' attributes, communications, and interests based on gender, even when objective measurement shows no differences between girls and boys.

This module, based on first-hand observations in, or reports from, child-care centers for children ages birth to three, helps parents and caregivers analyze the subtle ways in which they interact differently with girls and boys.

The exercise also sharpens awareness of the importance of these adult-child interactions in meeting children's needs and in helping each child to build a positive self-image, a sense of autonomy, confidence to explore the space around her/him, and trust in the adult world.

Time

45-60 minutes

Materials Needed

- Six task cards (three for parents, three for caregivers)
(See Reproducible Materials section.)

Procedure

Depending on whether the workshop participants are parents or caregivers, select the three relevant task cards. Have participants form three small groups of from two to six people, and give each group one task card. (Note: if you have more than eighteen parents or caregivers to train, repeat the task cards rather than create small groups of more than six people. If the participants include parents and caregivers, pick task cards from both groups.)

After the task cards have been distributed, ask the participants to read them aloud and discuss the question on the bottom of the card. Allow approximately fifteen minutes for the small group discussion. Ask each small group to begin the report-out by reading the task card to the whole group. After each report, encourage the whole group to contribute additional ideas to the discussion. If you think a key point has been overlooked, try to elicit it from the group with a question or comment. The text and some discussion stimulators for each of the task cards follow:

TASK CARD I (PARENT)

Tommy, age two, arrives at his center resplendent in a new "Superman" cape. Denise, also two, toddles up to him and says, "I want!" Tommy says, "Mine," and Denise begins to cry, repeating, "I want, I want." Tommy's mother, in an effort to comfort and distract Denise, says, "Come on, Denise, even though a girl can't be 'Superman,' you can be a beautiful ballerina. Let's go into the dress-up area and find you a costume." Denise reluctantly follows Tommy's mother into the dress-up area while Tommy goes to find Fred and Billy, his special day-care friends.

React to the gender messages in this situation.

Discussion Stimulators for Task Card I (Parent):

Did Tommy's mother really comfort Denise?

What effect do you think this situation had on Denise?
On Tommy?

What other strategy could have been used?

How do you think the situation might have been handled
if a boy toddler had wanted Tommy's cape?

TASK CARD II (PARENT)

Frank, who is not quite three, is just getting over the chicken pox. He is at home with his grandmother and his sister Evie, who is eighteen months old. Frank had been out of his day-care program for more than a week, and he is feeling quite restless. He is playing on the floor with all his cars and trucks. Evie is sitting in a highchair playing with her teddy bear. The doorbell rings and in walks Frank's caregiver who came to visit and bring him get-well cards from his friends. The children's grandmother takes Evie out of the highchair and sits her on the couch between herself and the visitor. When Frank's caregiver gets to play on the floor with him, Evie tries to run over and join them. Grandma, pulling her back to the couch says, "No, Evie, you stay here with me. You mustn't get dirty."

Discuss the different ways in which Grandma meets Frank's and Evie's needs as young children.

Discussion Stimulators for Task Card II (Parent):

Is it likely that Evie also was stuck in the house for more than a week?

Was Evie expected to be restless?

Discuss Evie's restrictions in terms of the needs of a young toddler.

What do Grandma's actions say about her expectations concerning girls and boys?

What are the implications of the differences in Frank's and Evie's toys?

TASK CARD III (PARENT)

The following incident takes place in a center where the parents are in a training program and are able to spend their lunch hours with their children:

It is after lunch, and two-and-one-half-year-old Peter sits isolated and crying. His mother is not there. The other parents are busy taking their children into the nursery for naptime. No one is paying attention to Peter. After about five minutes, a mother comes over to him and says sympathetically, "Oh, Peter, why are you crying?" A father immediately walks over and says, "I'll teach you to write your name." Peter continues to cry while the adult amuses himself by writing Peter's name on the blackboard. The first mother returns and says, "You want me to read you a story?" The father says, "His Mommy's not here," and, to Peter, "I'll get you a book." Peter takes the book and goes to lie down for a nap.

Analyze the differences in the father's and mother's attempts to meet Peter's needs.

Discussion Stimulators for Task Card III (Parent)

Is there a difference in the way the father and mother handled Peter's sadness? Do you think this is typical of males and females?

Do you think the adults' reactions might have been different if Peter were a girl? If so, how?

The ways in which adults react to a child help to shape the way that child sees her/himself. What is Peter learning, or not learning, about himself in this incident?

How else do you think the adults could have reacted to Peter's crying?

Why do you think men, generally, have such difficulty in expressing their emotions?

TASK CARD I (CAREGIVER)

A young female toddler, just learning to walk, pulls herself up to a standing position. The caregiver encourages her to walk, and says, "Oh, pretty!" when the child's lace-covered rubber pants are revealed. The child takes her first steps, and the caregiver says admiringly, "Don't you look pretty!"

Discuss the appropriateness and the implications of the caregiver's reaction to the child's accomplishment.

Discussion Stimulators for Task Card I (Caregiver)

If a young male toddler was taking his first steps, do you think a caregiver would say, "Don't you look pretty?"

What kinds of things might a caregiver say to a boy baby in this situation?

What sorts of things do adults notice and admire about baby girls? And baby boys?

Do you think adults are more interested in the appearance of girls than the appearance of boys? If so, how might this affect girls?

TASK CARD II (CAREGIVER)

The caregiver begins to clean up. She sings out, "Clean up time!" She asks the only girl in the room (23 months old) to help clean up by putting all the red, all the blue, etc. bristle blocks in the box. This little girl had been playing with the bristle blocks for the preceding five minutes, but the four boys in the room had been playing with them for about forty minutes a bit earlier. The girl works with the teacher, and the boys wander over to the bench, sit down, and wait to have their shoes put on to go outside.

Discuss the implications of this incident.

Discussion Stimulators for Task Card II (Caregiver)

Does this situation sound familiar? Why do you think the caregiver treated the boys and the girl differently?

What are the boys and the girls learning about what is expected of them? What are they learning to expect from other people?

What do children learn while cleaning up? What do they learn by getting out of cleaning up?

Do you think it is easier to get girls to clean up than boys? Why or why not?

What could the caregiver have done differently to support the boys' and the girl's growth?

TASK CARD III (CAREGIVER)

Five toddlers, four boys and one girl, are sitting in the book corner with the two female caregivers. All four boys are gathered around one of the caregivers looking at a book of trucks. She is commenting on the trucks and asking the boys to name them. One boy becomes upset when he is not allowed to turn the page when he wants to. The caregiver with the boys' group asks the other caregiver to pass him a book of his own. She offers him The Three Little Kittens, and without waiting to see the child's reaction, the first caregiver says, "No, give him one with trucks." At the same time, the only girl in the book corner is with the second caregiver looking at a photograph album/homemade book of a class trip. She begins by leaning on the caregiver's knee while they look at pictures of children in the Center and their families. The caregiver then picks up the girl and places her on her lap while they look at a book called Babies.

Discuss the sex-role messages being transmitted to the boys and girls in this situation.

Discussion Stimulators for Task Card III (Caregiver)

What are the ways in which the caregivers' behaviors are shaping boys and girls differently?

Assuming that the children picked out the books themselves, what could the adults have done to begin reversing sex-stereotyping?

What does the caregiver's body language tell the children?

After each group has reported, sum up the key points generated by the discussion, for example:

Sex-role stereotyping begins well before the age of three.

Sex-role stereotyping can affect children's physical and emotional growth.

The way an adult interacts with a child greatly influences the development of that child's self-image, positively or negatively.

Men and women, as a result of their own early socialization, react quite differently to the needs of infants and toddlers.

SESSION III: IDENTIFYING CONFLICTS AND
DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Purpose

This workshop will help participants identify the conflicts that arise when parents and caregivers begin to practice nonsexist childrearing. Participants will develop strategies for handling conflict situations.

Introductory Activity (15-20 minutes)

The discussion of the assignment from the previous session serves as an introductory activity to this one (see Content Modules - "Observing Girls and Boys in Infant-Toddler Child-Care Environments" and "Observing Parent-Child Interactions" - that follow).

Content Modules (see next page)

Observing Girls and Boys in Infant-Toddler Child-Care
Environments (15-20 minutes)

-or-

Observing Parent-Child Interactions (15-20 minutes)

Conflicts and Resolutions (80 minutes)

Summary (5-10 minutes)

Wrap-up Sessions I-III by drawing some conclusions from key points made in each of the workshops.

Evaluation (see Evaluation Tools section)

Questionnaire (10 minutes)

Hand-Out

Typed version of "Qualities List" generated by participants.

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION III:

OBSERVING GIRLS AND BOYS IN INFANT-TODDLER CHILD-CARE ENVIRONMENTS

Introduction

Observations in child-care centers show that, even within carefully planned environments, children often use areas and materials in sex-stereotyped ways. This module provides caregivers with an informal observation tool to help them take a new look at their center in terms of children's sex-stereotypical use of various areas and materials. As caregivers analyze their environments, they can begin to evaluate how they themselves use it with children, and whether they give subtle cues that reinforce sex-stereotyping.

Time

15-20 minutes

Materials Needed

- Observation checklists (enough copies for participants to have five checklists each; see Reproducible Materials section)

Procedure

At the end of the previous session (Session II), hand out copies of the Observation Checklists to participants as an assignment. Ask each participant to observe, if possible, on five different occasions for approximately fifteen minutes each time, using a different checklist sheet for each observation. During the observation, they should note on the checklist how many girls and how many boys are using the various areas and materials; they also should note separately whether they observe any differences in the ways in which girls and boys use the various areas and materials. At the beginning of the present session (Session III), have participants report on their observations.

Discussion

Begin the discussion by asking whether anyone observed any area or material that was used predominantly by either girls or boys. For example, did more boys than girls play in the block area or use the large motor equipment? Who used the art materials more? Ask whether anyone observed any differences in the way that girls and boys used various areas and materials. For example, did girls and boys get equally dirty using the

art materials? Did girls and boys take down toys from the low shelves? Who put them back? This can be an informal report-back, since the purpose of the module is not to conduct a statistical study, but to help people observe children and themselves in relationship to sex stereotyping in the infant-toddler environment.

If there is time, begin a discussion of how caregivers can encourage and redirect children's play in nonstereotypic ways. For example, caregivers can exhibit "modeling" behavior that says it's okay to play and get dirty; they can also play in the block area, thereby acting as a "magnet" for all the children.

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION III:

OBSERVING PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS

Introduction

It is difficult, but nonetheless important for parents to look somewhat objectively at their interactions with their children. This module provides parents with an informal observation tool for becoming aware of the ways in which they both reinforce and counteract sex-role stereotyping with their children.

Time

15-20 minutes

Materials Needed

- Observation sheets (enough copies for each participant; see Reproducible Materials section)

Procedure

At the end of the previous session (Session II), hand out copies of the observation sheets as an assignment. Ask the parents to observe their interactions with their children for one week and to write down one situation in which their behavior counteracted sex-role stereotyping and one situation in which their behavior reinforced it. When you begin the present session (Session III), have parents report on their observations.

Discussion

Since this might be a sensitive discussion for parents, it would be good for the workshop leader to begin the discussion with an anecdote illustrating how she or he unconsciously reinforced sex-role stereotyping. This will set the tone for sharing and will acknowledge that we all have been stereotyped and, therefore, sometimes behave in stereotyped ways. It is important to focus on the fact that it is possible to change and essential to do so if we want our children to realize their fullest potential. Be sure to have parents share positive as well as negative examples.

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION III:

CONFLICTS AND RESOLUTIONS

Introduction

Once parents and caregivers consciously practice nonsexist childrearing, they undoubtedly will encounter some conflict - with members of their own family, with people in the community, with other caregivers, or with parents of children in their centers. It is important for participants to think about these conflicts, to anticipate them, and to help each other develop strategies for dealing with them.

Time

80 minutes

Materials Needed

- Newsprint, markers and masking tape or blackboard and chalk

Procedure

Ask participants to brainstorm potential problems or conflict situations that might arise as they try to raise children in nonsexist ways. List the conflicts on newsprint or the blackboard. After approximately fifteen minutes, have participants form small groups of two to three people and have each group choose one of the conflict situations to role play for the large group. Give the small groups approximately ten minutes to prepare a one- to two-minute role play, assuring them that it does not have to be of "professional" quality. After each small group presents their conflict situation, have the whole group develop strategies for how the conflict can be resolved. Write the conflict at the top of a sheet of newsprint, and then add the resolution strategies as they are developed.

Discussion

In each of the parent and caregiver workshops during the pilot-testing of Project Beginning Equal, participants enthusiastically responded to the role-playing of conflict situations. Discussions were lively, and strategies were always practical and helpful. Although each discussion was based on a knowledge of a particular environment and situation, several conflicts and strategies were similar from group to group. Because it is useful to share strategies among different groups, following are several of the conflict situations and strategies that emerged during the pilot-testing. It is important to note that, in almost every pilot-testing workshop, a conflict

emerged regarding boys and doll play. The underlying issues in those conflicts are complex. (For a discussion of these issues, see Addressing Potential Conflicts, page 8.)

Sample conflict situation A, for parents:

Three-year-old sister wants to buy her new baby brother a pink rattle; salesperson discourages her, saying that her brother would like the blue one better.

Strategies for situation A: The influence of an "outsider" - whether it be a salesperson or a stranger on a bus - arose in many conflict situations and represent society's influence in the development of sex-role attitudes. There were several different strategies developed. In the situation described above, it was suggested that the parent with the three-year-old support the child in her choice of present. The salesperson should be told that there really is no way for him or her to know what color the baby would like best. In other situations, it might be better not to confront the "outsider," but to discuss the situation with the child afterwards. In any case, the situation should not go unnoticed.

Sample conflict situation B, for parents:

Eighteen-month-old boy likes to play with dolls. When he visits his relatives, his cousins make fun of him.

Strategies for situation B: The influence of other family members - cousins, grandparents, fathers - was a common source of potential conflict. This was especially true around the issue of boys playing with dolls, but also, in some cases, regarding the amount of freedom given to young girls. In the situation above, it was suggested that the parents talk to the child's aunt and uncle about why they, the parents, think it is good for their boy to play with dolls. They also should talk to the child, explaining that different people have different ideas about what is the "right" kind of play for boys and girls, but to emphasize that they think his playing with dolls is fun and wonderful. If the cousins continue to tease, it might be better to leave the doll home for those particular visits.

Sample conflict situation C, for caregivers:

Two-year-old girl comes to the center every day in frilly dresses. As a result, she doesn't participate in active play and she is afraid to use the art materials because she might get dirty.

Strategies for situation C: The issue of toddler girls' appropriate play clothes was brought up as a potential source of conflict between caregivers and parents. Caregivers felt it was important to talk to the parents to discuss how frilly dresses and party shoes really restrict a child's play opportunities, and to point out the developmental issues at stake for the child. Parents could be invited to observe the classroom to see for themselves how different children play. It also was felt that caregivers needed to be sensitive to the parents' needs in this situation. In some communities - whether for cultural or socioeconomic reasons - it might be important for parents to send children to the center dressed in what are considered "good" clothes. This is a reflection on the parents' ability to be a "good" parent. In these cases, it could be suggested that the parent bring another set of playclothes for the child to change into, or the center could have its own box of playclothes for the children.

Sample conflict situation D, for caregivers:

Two-and-a-half-year-old boy doesn't want to play with dolls and makes fun of boys who do.

Strategies for situation D: In situations such as this, caregivers might find that the parents support the boy in his decision not to play with dolls. It is also possible that the parents will agree with the caregivers that it is fine for the boy to play with dolls, but that the child has learned about "proper" boy's play from others around him. In either case, the caregiver should begin by talking to the parents, pointing out the need for small children to express a full range of emotions. It was agreed that the center should encourage the boy's doll play, even if not allowed at home.

[Note: The picture-book William's Doll by Charlotte Zolotow (New York: Harper & Row, 1972) provides an excellent resource for both parents and children. Although the family is white and middle-class, the sensitive story is applicable to all ethnic and socioeconomic groups. The story, which is written for older children, might be "told" to children under three.]

SESSION IV: ANALYZING TOYS FOR
SEX AND RACE STEREOTYPING

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Purpose

This workshop will help participants develop criteria for evaluating toys. It also will sharpen awareness about the sexist and racist messages inherent in toys and toy packaging. The workshop can be used as either an opening or closing session, and it is equally well suited for separate or mixed groups of parents and caregivers. If possible, it is especially effective to schedule this workshop prior to the winter holiday season so that participants can benefit directly as they do their toy purchasing.

Introduction (5-10 minutes)

If the workshop is the first of the series, select parts of the "Mini-Lecture: Sex-Role Stereotyping" module according to the time constraints and the needs of the group. Then, lead into a discussion of toys with a phrase such as:

Today we are going to focus on the role of toys during the first three years of life.

If the workshop is the last of the series, say something like:

We have spent some time together discussing sex-role socialization and the limits it imposes on the development of girls and boys, beginning at birth. We have looked at some of the ways in which we were socialized and how that process, in turn, has effected our attitudes and behaviors towards our own children, or the children in our care. In addition to looking at our own attitudes and behaviors, we have touched on the influences of the environment, the home, the day-care center, and the larger community. Today we are going to focus our attention on one aspect of that environment - toys. We are going to look at toys in terms of the kind of stereotyping we have discussed in other areas. Are toys stereotyped and if so, in what ways?

Content Modules (see next page)

Mini-Lecture: The Importance of Play (10-15 minutes)

Looking at Toys for Sex and Race Stereotyping (90 minutes)

Evaluation (see Evaluation Tools section)

Questionnaire (10 minutes)

Hand-Outs (see Reproducible Materials section)

Toys and Books for Children from Birth to Three

Selecting Age-Appropriate Toys for Infants and Toddlers

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION IV:

MINI-LECTURE: THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Before we can talk about toys, we need to think about play and playing. Although each individual child is different and each will adapt her/his own activity level and learning styles, for young children play is a major way of learning about the world, about themselves, and about how they fit into the world. After their fundamental needs for food and warmth and comfort are satisfied, it is through play that babies explore the environment, measure their own abilities, and stumble upon new experiences and new feelings. Play provides children with the opportunity to develop a sense of themselves, to learn new skills, and to become more competent with the old skills. The playing child is not only learning about the world "out there," but also about the world within. She or he is developing a sense of confidence and the ability to make choices as well as to experience what it feels like to make something happen. Most important to remember is that without fun or pleasure, no child is going to be motivated to learn.

One need not have expensive store-bought toys with which to play in order to make all of these important things happen. Toys do not make play happen, they just give it a boost. Parents the world over have provided their children with playthings that come from nature, from the home, and from the workplace. Mothers who work in the fields of Africa, in Latin America, and in many other places have always placed their infants under trees, thus providing them with "mobiles" made from leaves moving in the wind. Women who sell goods in the marketplaces throughout the world provide "toys" made from the materials they sell: scraps of fabric are fashioned into dolls; empty thread spools become beads to string; empty cans or containers become drums.

Throughout time, children, too, have made toys out of things they find around the home, regardless of where or what that home may be. A wooden spoon or an empty corn cob with a piece of cloth becomes a doll; a string and an empty plastic bottle becomes a pull toy; a gourd becomes a musical instrument; and cooking utensils become almost anything the child wants them to be.

Children under three are much more interested in what they can do with a toy, then in what the toy can do. That is, they are more interested in their own actions, pushing, pulling, collecting, and dumping than they are in anything else. They like to be the mover, the source of what is happening. When a ten-month-old baby drops her/his spoon again and again over the side of a highchair, she/he is learning about space (how far it is from hand to floor), about gravity (things really do fall when we let them go), about her/himself (I can make this happen). The toddler who collects all of the small items in the house - gloves, spools of thread, little dolls, spoons - and puts them in a bucket, dumps them out, and puts them back in again is learning things. The baby who is messing with food in a highchair tray may look like she or he is doing something very randomly.

But if you observe closely, you will see that, with the serious face of a scientist, the baby is exploring differences in temperature, in texture, and in what effect her/his actions have upon different foods. Smearing chocolate pudding is different from smearing little pieces of hamburger. Pounding a cracker on the tray produces a different effect than pounding some spilled juice. So what looks to adults like just messing means much more to the baby. It is part of learning about materials and about her/his relationship to them.

It is also important to remember that children don't always use toys the way the toy company - or we - expect them to. How many of us ever went out and bought a child a big fancy toy, only to find that the child was more interested in the box the toy came in? How many of us have bought an expensive plastic tea set for a child only to discover that she or he preferred playing with pots and pans from the kitchen?

It is important to remember that children need a range of materials. They need to have access to a variety of toys and household items: dolls and trucks, blocks and dishes, cardboard boxes, wooden spoons and objects, homemade or found objects, just as they need experiences with water, paints, crayons, and paper. Through these materials, they learn about themselves and about the world in many different ways.

CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION IV:

LOOKING AT TOYS FOR SEX AND RACE STEREOTYPING

Introduction

Workers have tools, cooks have utensils, musicians have instruments, and children have toys. Play is often called the work of childhood, and toys (in concert with human interaction) are the tools through which children develop physical, social, and emotional skills. Toys serve many important functions: they are fun, they teach skills, they comfort, and they enhance imagination. In addition, toys are powerful conveyers of societal messages, and the way they are promoted and packaged can limit their use according to sex and/or race, thereby denying whole groups of children the opportunity to play and learn through them. For example, toy dishes help children practice setting the table, learn about measurement and volume by filling the cups and bowls, sort and categorize by stacking some pieces together, and count. Children also learn social skills as they sit around the table and engage in dramatic play centered around eating at home or in a restaurant. If, however, the dishes are all pink and are decorated with little girls dressed in old-fashioned clothing, they will not be bought for, or used by, boys. Even the pretend play of girls with such stereotyped "tea party" dishes will be different than if the dishes were more representative of real eating utensils.

When toys come in packages depicting only white children, all children receive powerful, nonverbal messages about who is and who is not important. For children of color, the message can be particularly damaging to the development of a positive self-image. Fortunately, there has been some improvement in toy packaging in this regard. So, with awareness, it is possible to choose items that reflect the multiracial society in which we live.

This two-part module will help participants look at toys in new ways. First, they will be asked to generate a list of criteria for selecting quality toys, and then they will engage in hands-on analysis of toys and toy packaging for purposes of discovering inherent sexist and racist messages.

Time

Part I - Warm-up (15 minutes)

Part II - Analysis (15 minutes)

Materials Needed

- Newsprint and marker or blackboard and chalk
- Selection of sexist/racist and nonsexist/nonracist toys
- Task cards (see Reproducible Materials section)

Notes about materials: You will need to collect and/or purchase several examples of sexist and racist toys as well as alternative items that are not sexist or racist in content or packaging. Select items from the following categories; each category should contain both sexist/racist and nonsexist/nonracist examples.

Dolls - Select a mixture of boy and girl baby dolls and rag dolls including Caucasian, Black, and Hispanic. It is much harder to find examples of boy dolls, and dolls of different racial/ethnic groups usually abound with stereotypes, i.e., Black dolls have exaggerated features, or at the other extreme, have Caucasian features with dark skin.

Rattles - Some rattles are pink and have kewpie doll faces or other themes that suggest "girls only." Others are blue and are purchased predominantly for boys. There is, however, a wide range of excellent toys in this category that are made of bright, primary colors and are packaged for both sexes. It is also relatively easy to find examples of multiracial packaging in this category.

Playdishes - Select a variety of playdishes ranging from all-pink, sexist sets to primary colors or metal sets suitable for all children. The hardware store is a good place to find sturdy plastic plates and cups.

Cart and carrying toys - In this category, it is likely that the packaging, not the item itself, will be sexist or racist. For example, a toy shopping cart is an item that all toddlers like. The package, however, usually shows a white girl pretending to be a "Mommy." A shopping cart and a blockwagon will provide graphic examples of how packaging can reinforce sex-role stereotyping.

Trucks - Select dump trucks, wooden trucks, and sturdy plastic trucks for toddler use. Fire trucks with a tall ladder can be used as an example of poor safety for this age group. It also should be relatively easy to find examples of sexist packaging, featuring boys only, in this category.

Manipulatives - This category, which includes shape-sorters, busy boxes, cradle gyms, pounding benches, etc., is a good one to provide nonsexist, multiracial examples. Baby items often do come in packages that show girls and boys from various racial groups.

PART I: WARM-UP

Procedure

Lead participants in a discussion of what constitutes a quality toy for infants and toddlers. Ask questions to stimulate discussion and feel free to make suggestions of your own based on personal experience.

After participants have had a general discussion, ask them to generate a list of criteria they all agree should be used in purchasing toys for this age group. Make sure that the list addresses packaging, issues of sexism and racism, safety, and age-appropriateness. The list should be clearly visible so participants can refer to it during the next activity.

PART II - ANALYZING TOYS

Procedure

Have participants form small groups. Give each group a category of toys and a task card (see below). Allow ten to fifteen minutes for small group discussion.

TASK CARD

Please consider the toys you have in light of the criteria for a good toy we just generated, and answer the following questions:

Is the toy appropriate for all children?
(Consider both the package and the toy.)

What needs does the toy serve?

Discussion

After the small groups have finished, facilitate a large group discussion about the toys. If participants have not uncovered sexism or racism in the toy or package, ask questions to help them discover it for themselves, or ask the large group members to share their perceptions with the reporting group. If, however, no one comes up with an answer, do not hesitate to

supply the information. Whenever possible, refer to the criteria list to reinforce the discussion of what makes a quality toy for children under three. For example, if racist packaging is overlooked, you can point to this criterion on the list and ask the group if it has been met.

Summarize the discussion by highlighting the criteria for quality toys as well as key points made by participants; for example:

All children respond more to toys that are brightly colored.

Many household items make excellent toys for girls and boys, e.e., wooden spoons, pots and pans, plastic food containers.

Sometimes it is necessary to remove sexist and/or racist packaging and re-wrap a toy before presenting it to a child.

No toy is really suitable for only a girl or only a boy.

Sexist restrictions on toy use deny children valuable play and learning experiences.

Hardware stores, art supply stores, and office supply stores, as well as toy stores, are a source of playthings.

Homemade toys and books are very special because they convey to the child that you cared enough to make something just for her or him.

Every toy should be nonsexist, nonracist, safe, imaginative, and durable.

Quality is more important than quantity when choosing toys.

FOLLOW-UP SESSION (OPTIONAL): CONTINUING TO ADDRESS
ISSUES OF SEX ROLES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

Purpose

The process of counteracting sex roles is an ongoing one. It is important for caregivers and parents to realize that it may take a long time to build an atmosphere in which change can take place. They need to be assured that the seeds they plant will eventually blossom. Therefore, it is recommended that after the workshop series has been completed, you plan a follow-up workshop to develop ways in which the center can continue to address issues of sex-role stereotyping.

Content and Structure

The content and structure of the follow-up workshop will depend on the needs of each individual center. In some centers, the workshop may be conducted for administrators and caregivers who will then share the information with parents. In other centers, you may plan to conduct two follow-up workshops, one for caregivers and one for parents. In still other centers, it may be optional to plan a combined session for caregivers and parents. Some content areas to consider are:

Collecting and maintaining resources for caregivers and parents;

Sharing information and resources with other centers;

Analyzing toys and books in the center for bias;

Developing a commitment statement about fostering a nonsexist and nonracist environment as part of the center's philosophy.

Resources

Building a permanent resource collection is an excellent idea for all centers that want to continue to address the issue of sex-role stereotyping. While each center's financial situation will determine the extent of their collection, many of the materials are inexpensive, and the free reproducible materials in this manual are a good beginning.

During the pilot-testing of Project Beginning Equal, a "Resource Box" was assembled and given to each participating center. These materials, for caregivers and parents, provide an ongoing source of information and reinforce the center's commitment to nonsexist childrearing. The contents of the

Resource Box - childrearing books, bibliographies, records, posters, and background readings - are described in the Reference Materials section of this manual.

The Resource Box provided the structure for the follow-up workshop which BE team members conducted for caregivers in each center. A display of the materials was set up, and each item was discussed in depth and passed around to the participants. Workshop leaders helped the caregivers to see themselves as human resources, capable of sharing their knowledge of and commitment to the issue with others.

FORMAT B: ONE-DAY INSTITUTE

ONE-DAY INSTITUTE: DO CHILDREN BEGIN EQUAL?

A MINI-COURSE EXPLORING SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING

DURING THE FIRST THREE YEARS

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Purpose

A one-day institute will provide participants with an excellent overview to the issue of sex-role stereotyping. An all-day, in-depth session is a practical way to appeal to both caregivers and parents with busy schedules. As a group warm-up activity, participants generate a list of qualities to foster in all children; they come back to the list as a closing activity, providing continuity from the beginning to the end of the day. During the day, participants explore their own sex-role attitudes, how they were formed, and how they are manifested in interactions with infants and toddlers. Participants also identify possible conflict situations and help each other develop strategies for dealing with them.

Schedule and Activities

When conducting an all-day session, it is often necessary to plan for short morning or afternoon breaks. It is also a good idea to begin the day with socializing over coffee and tea and donuts or rolls. During the pilot-testing of Project Beginning Equal, the following schedule was found to be an effective one for an intensive day of training:

10:00 - 10:15: Coffee and Donuts

10:15 - 10:30: Introductory Activities

Have participants introduce themselves and share some information either about their children, their work, or their interest in the topic. Provide an overview of the day's activities and a brief introduction to the topic, adapted from the Mini-Lecture: Sex-Role Stereotyping content module (see page 33).

10:30 - 11:00: Content Module - Generating a List of Qualities to Foster in All Children (see page 45)

11:00 - 12:00: Content Module - "Happy to Be Me": A Film Exploring Sex-Role Attitudes (see page 37); if film is not available, use alternative Exploring Sex-Role Attitudes content module (see page 39)

12:00 - 1:00: Lunch

1:00 - 1:30: Content Module - Analyzing Baby Congratulations Cards for Sex-Stereotyped Messages (see page 54)

2:30 - 2:45: Break

2:45 - 4:15: Content Module - Conflicts and Resolutions (see page 70) or Examining Childrearing Literature for Bias (see page 88; this module is recommended for groups of directors, educational directors and staff developers, as well as caregivers with a substantial amount of professional training)

4:15 - 4:30: Closing Activity, Summary

Have participants review the Qualities List they generated at the beginning of the day and make additions or revisions as needed. Each participant should make a copy of the list to take home or back to the center. Wrap-up the session by drawing some conclusions about sex-role attitudes, where they come from, and how they affect children. Review the strategies for change developed by participants.

4:30 - 4:45: Evaluation (see Evaluation Tools section)

4:45 - 5:00: Handouts (see Reproducible Materials section)

When conducting an all-day institute, it is a good idea to give participants their hand-outs in the form of a packet and to spend time going over the packet at the end of the session. This packet can become a permanent resource that participants can add to and refer to at a later date. It might include:

Definitions of Sexism

What are the Facts?

Exploring Sex-Role Attitudes Questionnaire

Observation Checklist/Sheet

Toys and Books for Children from Birth to Three

Selecting Age-Appropriate Toys for Infants and
Toddlers

CONTENT MODULE FOR ONE-DAY INSTITUTE:

EXAMINING CHILDREARING LITERATURE FOR BIAS

Introduction

The printed word has a powerful effect on all of us. When reading a professional text, we expect, and rightly so, that it represents years of study and research on the part of the author, and we think that we have much to learn from her/his expertise. We tend to forget, however, that much research is conducted by individuals who have been socialized to believe that sex differences are innate, and who bring that bias to their work. Their bias, in turn, serves to shape our opinions and attitudes.

If we are to grow and develop as professionals in the field of infant-toddler care, it is essential to study the research and to read the experts. However, it is also essential to develop a critical sense about what we read, to become aware of inherent biases, and to question assumptions that we may have accepted in the past. This workshop is designed to help caregiving professionals, particularly those who are responsible for staff development, analyze basic readings in their field in terms of bias due to sex.

Time

90 minutes

Materials Needed

- Task cards

Procedure

Prepare your own task cards with excerpts taken from widely-read childrearing texts (some sample task cards are provided on the following pages). These excerpts should present contrasting views on day care, sex-role socialization, attributes of a healthy child, etc. Photographs or illustrations from different texts also can reveal much about sex-role stereotyping. Divide participants into small groups and distribute the task cards. Ask them to read the excerpts carefully and discuss the questions at the top of each card.

SAMPLE TASK CARD

The following excerpts are taken from widely-used childrearing literature. Please compare and contrast them. What does each excerpt say about sex-role socialization? What does each excerpt say about parent-child relationships? Be prepared to share your discussion with the group.

Statement #1

A mother becomes understandably distressed by the tomboy's sloppiness, her unkempt hair, her jeans, her cowboy antics, and the urge to "make a lady out of her" is irresistible and leads repeatedly to conflicts over dress, manners, a hundred details in the ordinary routine of a day. But ladies are not made by wearing down their resistance to femininity. And it is so easy for a father to fall in with a tomboy's romping and rough play which, after all, brings him closer to his own childhood than the incomprehensible games of a daughter. . . . What we need to do is to strengthen and promote the feminine side of the child, diminish the satisfactions gained through playing boy, and eventually without conflict over jeans, hairdos and manners, the boy pose may be given up because being a girl has greater satisfaction.

Statement #2

Many people are finding that the traditional distinctions between male and female roles are less and less suited to the demands of today's society. As a result, many parents are consciously choosing to expand the kinds of experiences their children have. Instead of raising their daughter to be a "little lady" and their son to be a "little gentleman," they focus on trying to help their child, of either sex, be an inquisitive, active, emotionally secure, caring individual. You will need to examine your beliefs carefully; as your child begins to role play the multiplicity of actions and the situations he's [sic] already witnessed, it will be up to you to guide him [sic] in the directions you value most.

#1: Selma H. Fraiberg, from The Magic Years: Understanding the Problems of Early Childhood. Copyright © 1959 Selma Fraiberg. Reprinted with permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

#2: Reprinted from Good Beginnings: Parenting in the Early Years, a book by Evans and Ilfield. Published by High/Scope Press, 600 North River Street, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197.

SAMPLE TASK CARD

The following excerpts are taken from books written by well-known teacher educators. Compare and contrast the attitudes about childrearing they convey. Be prepared to share your thoughts with the group.

Statement #1

The problem of separation and maternal care is something of an invented problem, in as much as vast numbers of children, including infants, have been daily separated from mothers who work throughout the world for generations, as we have earlier pointed out. Children have been cared for historically in multiple care relations by other members of the extended family or neighbors, and more recently by baby sitters, while the mother works in the fields, community, or on the job. Although there are consequences, they do not appear to be either necessarily bad or necessarily good. How children develop, in other words, depends more on the quality of care than on the setting or the fact of a single caregiver versus many caregivers in day care or the home. Group day care, moreover, offers certain possibilities for enriching the variety of social, intellectual, and play experiences that are often difficult to match in all but the wealthiest homes. Yet the bond, and the quality of loving attention, between parent and child may even be enhanced through the day care experience, as some studies show.

Statement #2

Skilled day care workers cannot be had for a song (if they could, you would become an exploiter), nor can physical facilities needed for a sound operation - ample quarters, good climate control, the right sorts of play equipment and toys, the necessary safety measures, access to outdoor play areas. Harrassed and underpaid workers are not likely to be good for your child, and even capable workers cannot do much without adequate facilities.

Thus, if you are counting on a day-care center to play substitute mother while you work, please be aware that good day care is almost certain to be expensive. If you just want to put your child in a storage bin, then you decided wrong about having a child.

#1: From William Fowler, Infant and Child Care: A Guide to Education in Group Settings. Copyright © 1980 by Allyn and Bacon, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

#2: From Joseph Church, Understanding Your Child from Birth to Three, Copyright © 1973 by Random House, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

SAMPLE TASK CARD

The following excerpts are taken from leading parent/caregiver education texts. Compare and contrast the qualities they focus on in toddlers. Be prepared to share your discussion with the group.

Statement #1

He was a beautiful, strong boy who was not easily frightened or worried, who seemed sturdily masculine with his swaggering gait, his aggressive inquisitiveness, and his sober ways of watching and understanding as one showed him how to do things.

Statement #2

With a firm cry another human is born into the world. Over the next three years the development proceeds at a remarkably rapid and efficient rate. The helpless, dependent infant will become a competent individual able to sustain deep attachments to other humans, capable of physical control and dexterity, and skilled at communicating with language. She will become a talented player, problem solver, and sophisticated socializer. The child acquires many of the complex skills we prize and consider uniquely human.

#1: From Toddlers and Parents: A Declaration of Independence by T. Berry Brazelton. Copyright © 1974 by T. Berry Brazelton. Reprinted by permission of Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence.

#2: From "Developmental Issues Important for Group Infant/Toddler Care" by Marlene Weinstein and Megan Spencer Flynn in Caring for Infants and Toddlers: What Works, What Doesn't by Robert Lurie and Roger Neugebauer. Reprinted with permission of Child Care Information Exchange, P.O. Box 2890, Redmond, WA 98052.

SAMPLE TASK CARD

The following illustrations are from a leading parent education text. Compare and contrast what they convey about adult-child interaction.



Copyright (text) © 1970 by Ira J. Gordon.
Copyright (illus.) © 1970 by St. Martin's Press.
From the book, Baby Learning Through Baby Play:
A Parent's Guide, and reprinted by permission of
St. Martin's Press, Inc., New York.

SAMPLE TASK CARD

The following illustrations are from a well-known caregiver education text. Compare and contrast what they convey about children's play.



Sometimes I play by myself.

33



Sometimes I play by myself.

34

Copyright (text) © 1972 by The University of Florida.
Copyright (illus.) © 1972 by St. Martin's Press.
From the book, Child Learning Through Child Play:
Learning Activities for Two- and Three-Year Olds by
Ira J. Gordon, Barry Guinagh, R. Emile Jester, and
reprinted by permission of St. Martin's Press, Inc.,
New York.

Discussion

As the small groups report on their discussions to the larger group, certain key points should emerge. For example, based on the previous samples:

Some of the statements highlight the relevance of a nonsexist childrearing approach in today's world, while others serve to exacerbate sex-role divisions, lack of understanding, and rivalry between the sexes.

The negative statement regarding day-care encourages guilt in the majority of parents who work outside the home, thereby undermining their self-confidence. Such statements also reveal class bias on the part of the author by assuming that working outside the home is a matter of choice for most women.

Some of the excerpts celebrate the full human potential of all children.

As professionals, we have a responsibility to make caregivers and parents aware that many books on childrearing contain inherent biases and assumptions about sex roles, and that it is necessary to question the experts.

As professionals, we have a responsibility to share our knowledge of childrearing books that do not limit children.

The simple drawings reveal much about sex-role stereotyping, i.e., girls' passive versus boys' active play; adults helping girls do simple tasks; the intellectual and active quality of adults' interaction with boys.

OVERVIEW SESSION: THE PINK AND BLUE SYNDROME -
SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING DURING THE FIRST THREE YEARS

Purpose

It is possible, even during a one and one-half or two-hour workshop, to provide a lively introduction to the topic of sex-role stereotyping that will generate interest on the part of participants to pursue the subject further. As a warm-up, the session begins with the "Boy Meets Girl" excerpt from the Free to Be You and Me record (see alternative Sex-Role Attitudes content module, page 39), a humorous introduction to the topic of sex-role stereotyping beginning at birth. Participants then work in small groups to examine baby congratulation cards as a means to examine very early sex-role attitudes that limit children's potential. As an antidote to these attitudes, participants work together to generate a list of positive qualities that they would like to see fostered in all children, regardless of whether they are female or male. The timing of the modules can be adjusted depending on the length of the session.

Introductory Activity (5-10 minutes)

Have participants introduce themselves and share some information about their children, their work, or their interest in the topic.

Content Modules

"Boy Meets Girl" - warm-up from alternative Exploring Sex-Role Attitudes content module (15 minutes; see page 39.)

Analyzing Baby Congratulation Cards for Sex-Stereotyped Messages (30-60 minutes; see page 54.)

Generating a List of Qualities to Foster in All Children (30 minutes; see page 45.)

Evaluation (see Evaluation Tools section)

Questionnaire (10 minutes)

Hand-Outs (see Reproducible Materials section)

Definitions of Sexism

What Are the Facts

Exploring Sex-Role Attitudes Questionnaire

REPRODUCIBLE MATERIALS

- Definitions of Sexism
- What Are the Facts?
- Exploring Sex-Role Attitudes
- Observation Checklist
- Parents' Observation Sheet
- Toys and Books for Children from Birth to Three
- Selecting Age-Appropriate Toys for Infants and Toddlers
- Task Cards for Content Module for Session I:
Exploring Sex-Role Attitudes (Alternative Module)
- Task Cards for Content Module for Session II:
Exploring Childrearing/Caregiving Situations for
Gender Differences
- Task Card for Content Module for Session IV:
Looking at Toys for Sex and Race Stereotyping

DEFINITIONS OF SEXISM

Sexism is:

Any attitude, action, or institutional structure which subordinates a person or group because of their sex.

Sexism can be:

Individual, cultural or institutional.

Intentional or unintentional.

EXAMPLES OF SEXISM

Individual Sexism:

"You throw a ball just like a girl."

"That's a woman driver for you!"

"Billy, please carry the movie projector. Sally, you wash the blackboard."

"He's as giggly as a girl."

"Do you want the baby blanket pink or blue?"

"The erector set is for John, and the Barbie doll for Jill."

Institutional Sexism:

"This firm hires and promotes the most experienced people."

Presidents of industry, boards of directors of universities, heads of medical associations and Presidents of the U.S.A. have been, and still are, almost all male (and white).

Working women earn an average of 60% of what working men earn.

"Our textbook is Men Who Made America Great."

Reprinted from: "Fact Sheets on Institutional Sexism," a publication of the Council on Interracial Books for Children, January 1982. Write for a free catalog listing anti-sexist, anti-racist print and AV teaching materials: CIBC, 1841 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.

WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

Note: Fold sheet in half. Read statements on left-hand side first, and decide whether you think they are true or false. Answers appear at the bottom of the last page. When you are finished, turn to the other side of the sheet for documentation of the facts.

TRUE OR FALSE

1. Even if the babies are wearing only diapers, you can always tell a boy from a girl.
2. At birth, boy babies are more active than girl babies.
3. Parents respond differently to fussiness in an infant son than to fussiness in an infant daughter.

FACTS

If babies are not wearing clothes that provide a cue to gender, it is not possible to tell their sex. In a study of a baby called "X," one group of adults was told that a baby on film was a boy, and another group was told that it was a girl. Each group had no trouble finding characteristics of the baby that fit its belief that it was a boy or a girl; the groups sometimes interpreted the same behavior differently depending on which sex they were told the baby was.

Laura S. Sidorowicz, "Baby X Revisited," Sex Roles 6:1, 1980.

The activity level of babies, including bodily movements, sucking, etc., does not correlate with sex differences. There are some boys and some girls who are identified as particularly active, calm, restless, etc.

Nancy Romer, The Sex-Role Cycle: Socialization from Infancy to Old Age (Old Westbury, N.Y.: The Feminist Press, 1981).

Infant fussiness at three months is responded to differently depending on the sex of the baby. Female infants are spoken to, imitated, and looked at; male infants are given close physical contact.

Shirley Weitz, Sex Roles: Biological, Psychological and Social Foundations (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

WHAT ARE THE FACTS? (continued)

TRUE OR FALSE

4. Mothers nurse girl and boy babies differently.
5. At birth, parents will describe an infant differently depending on whether it is a boy or a girl.
6. Newborn boys are physically sturdier than newborn girls.
7. As soon as children really begin to play with toys, girls naturally will choose dolls and other soft toys while boys naturally will choose cars and other mechanical toys.

FACTS

Studies have shown that mothers have more respect for a baby's own rhythms if it is a boy; with girls they adopt a "mother knows best" attitude.

Lois Barclay Murphy, The Widening World of Childhood: Paths Toward Mastery (New York: Basic Books, 1962).

Immediately after their baby is born, parents describe and interpret their infant's behavior along sex-stereotypical lines. They describe daughters as softer, finer featured, smaller, and more attentive; sons are seen as fussier, larger featured, better coordinated, more alert, stronger, and hardier. Newborn daughters are likely to be described as beautiful, pretty, or cute much more often than newborn sons.

Michael Lewis and Marisa Weintraub, "Origins of Early Sex-Role Development," Sex Roles 5:2, 1979.

The difference in weight between girl and boy babies is statistically negligible. Boy babies are more vulnerable to physical problems in utero and suffer more than girl babies from congenital disorders.

Ann Oakley, Sex, Gender and Society (New York: Harper and Row, 1972).

This is not a "natural" choice, since parents encourage children to play with "appropriate" male or female toys. Child psychologist and educator Jean Piaget has shown that if a child has some experience with an object and feels more comfortable with it, she or he will choose to explore that object further and turn to it for pleasure.

C. Seavey, P. Katz, and S. Zalk, "Baby X: The Effect of Gender Labels on Adult Responses to Infants," Sex Roles 1:1, 1975.

Jean Piaget, The Origins of Intelligence (New York: International Universities Press, 1952).

WHAT ARE THE FACTS? (continued)

TRUE OR FALSE

8. Fathers tend to rough-house more with boys than with girls; they are more likely to tell their girls how pretty they look.

9. Fathers are less capable of taking care of newborn infants than mothers.

FACTS

Studies show that fathers, through their comments and in the ways in which they play, sex-stereotype their children more than mothers.

Ross D. Parke, Fathers (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980).

Fathers, and men generally, often feel incompetent handling infants, but the skills can be learned if they so desire. Their feeling of incompetence is mostly due to lack of experience. Studies have shown that fathers who are the primary parent are extremely competent and nurturant with their children.

Ross D. Parke, Fathers (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980).

ANSWERS: 1. False. 2. False.

3. True. 4. True. 5. True.

6. False. 7. False. 8. True

9. False.

Prepared by Milly Hawk Daniel, Judith Leipzig, and Sandy Weinbaum
for Beginning Equal: The Project on Nonsexist Childrearing for
Infants and Toddlers

EXPLORING SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

	Agree	Disagree	No Opinion
1. Boys of any age are physically stronger than girls.			
2. There is something wrong with boys who are fashion-conscious.			
3. Boys should be encouraged to be athletic.			
4. Girls are not as good as boys in math and science.			
5. There's something wrong with boys who want to care for babies and children.			
6. It is more important for a boy to continue education or training after high school than for a girl.			
7. Girls should be disciplined more leniently than boys.			
8. Girls like to gossip more than boys.			
9. Boys are naturally more independent than girls.			
10. Boys should be given more physical education opportunities than girls.			
11. Girls should learn to cook, sew, and keep house.			
12. Girls need less freedom than boys.			
13. Girls need more protection than boys.			
14. Girls are more emotional than boys.			
15. Boys do not need to learn to cook, sew, or keep house.			
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7

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

TYPICAL ASPECTS OF AN INFANT-TODDLER CHILD-CARE ENVIRONMENT			WHO IS USING THESE MATERIALS IN YOUR CHILD-CARE ENVIRONMENT?	
MATERIALS AND AREAS	ACTIVITIES	SKILLS DEVELOPED	GIRLS	BOYS
Low shelves for toys	explore without adult help and initiate their own learning	develops independence and a sense of autonomy		
Child-size tables and chairs	climb in and out of chairs without help (the furniture is just their size)	develops independence and autonomy; affirms children's growth		
Some adult-size furniture	see their parents use it in comfort; climb in and out of it as they would at home	communicates that parents are part of the center; creates homelike atmosphere		
High chairs close to the tables	children in high chairs eat together with the children sitting at tables and chairs	develops a social unit that includes everyone		
Cheerful changing area; more than one potty	talk to each other and to teachers; have fun together	gives good feelings about themselves and their bodies		
Space to close off for sleeping	different children are on different schedules; some sleep while others are awake	recognizes individual differences		
Materials (real and child-size) for dramatic play	practice opening and closing; putting on and taking off; mimic adults	gives opportunities to explore the physical traits of things and to experiment with adult roles		
Blocks and other building materials	stack, knock down, and transport blocks	enables them to explore the physical traits of the material; learn about balance, gravity; helps them acquire sense of competency		
Art materials	begin applying paint and glue randomly and gradually develop their own process	teaches that there is no one right answer; enables them to explore the physical properties of open-ended materials		
Large motor equipment	climb, slide, rock	gives them good feelings about their bodies; develops physical competency		
Pictures on walls of people, food, animals	point to them and talk about them	builds language; develops social skills		

Reprinted from Rachel Theilheimer, "Creating a Child-Care Environment for Infants and Toddlers," Equal Play, Vol. III, Nos. 3 & 4, Summer-Fall 1982. Women's Action Alliance, Inc., 370 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017.

PARENTS' OBSERVATION SHEET

A situation in which my behavior with my child counteracted sex-role stereotyping:

A situation in which my behavior with my child reinforced sex-role stereotyping:

Reprinted from Milly Hawk Daniel, "Toys and Books for Children from Birth to Three," *Equal Play*, Vol. III, Nos. 3 & 4, Summer-Fall, 1982. Women's Action Alliance, Inc., 370 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017.

Toys and Books for Children from Birth to Three

It could be argued that children younger than three really don't need "formal" toys at all. Certainly, they don't need toys that are complex and expensive. However, given the fact that adults (parents and caregivers alike) will probably always want to buy toys for children, I visited toy and book stores in New York City to see what was readily available in the way of nonsexist, nonracist items for infants and toddlers.

One of my concerns was whether there were any significant differences in the kinds of toys one could buy at different types of stores. So I visited a variety of stores throughout New York City, including high priced specialty stores (Penny Whistle, FAO Schwartz, Toy Park); used toy stores (Peanut Gallery, Play It Again); department stores (Gimbels, Macys); variety stores (Lamstons, Woolworths); stationery stores; book departments of toy stores; and children and adult bookstores. I found that it is possible to find a variety of good and appropriate toys for infants and toddlers in almost any of the stores I visited (books are a different story), but that a few cautions are necessary before one starts out.

Shopping Cautions

Traveling through toy stores, I was struck by the racist and sexist messages of the packaging of toys for infants and toddlers. For most children, the signals sent by these boxes say, "This toy is not for you!" As with toys for older children, one gets the clear impression from the wrappers that most toys are intended for white males. Female and nonwhite children almost never appear, except on boxes containing dolls and then in passive on-looking poses.

Since this is the rule, it is important to note the one exception from Johnson and Johnson. This line of toys, which are keyed to developmental stages of infants and toddlers, really stand out. The children that appear on the boxes are female and male, and there are Black, Hispanic, and Asian children depicted as well as white children. The toys come with a booklet for parents about child development, suggesting the best ways to use the enclosed toy at various stages.

With the exception of these toys from J & J, parents would be well advised to follow the admonitions of many others who have thought it best to throw away the packaging that toys come in and rewrap before passing on to children. Or to purchase one of the many toys for infants and toddlers, such as teething rings and push toys, that don't come in packages at all.

Another important note about packaging: Beware the "suggested age" cautions on most toy boxes. While you might want to consider such suggestions as a guide, don't take them as absolute. It's much more important to observe your child to ascertain the toys that would be most appropriate at a given age. For example, the popular "busy boxes" for cribs show an infant of about nine months on the box. Unless encouraged by an adult, my daughter never played with her "busy box" until she



was about three or four years old, when she used it as a make-believe briefcase and carried it by the handle.

Children don't jump from one toy to another at the appropriate age; they coast into another "stage" as their experience and interest allows them. Adults who purchase toys and other materials for children would do better—by their children as well as their pocketbooks—to select toys and materials that have long-range potential and that can be used in different ways at different stages in their child's development. Toys that can be used in only one way are limiting.

However, just because a toy seems inappropriate—or sexist or racist—doesn't mean it has to be thrown away. Before discarding it, take a look to see if it has any potential at all. For example, I saw an interesting set of stacking and nesting wooden blocks in one toy store. The wood, which was encased in clear plastic packaging, seemed to be of good quality. But the pictures attached to the sides of the blocks were another matter. They depicted only white people: boys chasing dogs and throwing balls and girls playing with dolls or sitting on the sides of bridges looking longingly into lakes and streams. It would be easy to replace these pictures by covering them with photographs or magazine cutouts, thereby making a nonstereotypic toy without having to cut pieces of wood to fit inside one another perfectly on your own.

The following descriptions report on the many kinds of toys that are readily available in a variety of stores.

Toys for Babies

There are many quality *teething rings* in a variety of shapes, designs, and materials—wood, hard plastics, and rubber. And though some are found in the proverbial pink and blue, there are also lots of other colors and natural woods to choose from. So it is, too, with *rattles*. Though many of these have traditionally-colored ribbons attached, these can easily be removed. *Mobiles* abound in most stores—some musical, some not—many with animal shapes in various colors and patterns dangling from them. (Beware of ones depicting sexist nursery

rhymes.) One of the more "modern" looking ones features shapes of the moon, stars, and sun in bright satiny material in strong colors. Another recent design, from a Swedish manufacturer, is a set that comes with a strong red crossbar (one for fitting across a crib, another that fits across a travel crib or smaller bed) and a series of different mobiles and other *crib toys* that can be purchased separately to hang from the bar at the appropriate stage of the infant's development.

Also for the crib are a variety of "busy boxes" which can be hung from the side or, later when the child is playing on the floor, can be used there as well. These boxes contain a variety of activities—bells to ring, a small mirror, things that can be pulled and pushed, and others that make different sounds. (As noted earlier, I've often found that toddlers like this toy, too, because of the handle on top that makes carrying easy.)

Toys for Older Infants

As the infant progresses from the crib and being held to creeping and crawling across the floor, there are quite a few toys available to attract attention. *Plastic and rubber balls*—some with interesting things inside—roll gently just out of reach when the infant swats them, encouraging her or him to crawl after it. Sometimes bells or rattles sound inside as the ball rolls. A plastic *donut-shaped stacking toy* in bright colors has many possibilities. The shapes roll, float in water, and can be sucked and chewed as well. Later, they can be fitted onto the plastic stick for stacking and taking apart and they can be stored in a pail for filling and dumping.

A variety of *push/pull toys* are also available. The material is usually wood or plastic, sometimes with music, sometimes without. Often, however, one feels that many of the wooden toys are more for the aesthetic pleasure of adults than the enjoyment of children. One of the problems with pull toys in general is that children have to continually look back to see where the action is and, therefore, have to remember to keep looking forward occasionally to see where they are going. Beginning walkers find it much easier to negotiate push toys, which generally have strong plastic or wooden sticks that are connected to animal shapes or other interesting things at the end. One of the most popular is the "popper." This push toy has an enclosed, plastic half-circle that contains beads that "pop" up and down and around as the toy is pushed. Other push toys have trains with wheels that move and ducks with legs that flap as the toys are pushed.

Sorting boxes are also available in plastic or wood from many different manufacturers. Some offer only a few shapes to fit into the appropriate cutouts on only one side of an object, others are more complicated with more shapes and more places to put them. Most toy stores contain a variety of *water toys*—from simple plastic fish to more elaborate frogs that "catch" tadpoles in the water. Boats and other floating toys can be found everywhere, from fancy versions in expensive toy stores to simpler, less expensive but equally good ones in stores such as Woolworths and Lamsons.

Several stores carry a variety of simple *form puzzles* in animal shapes. (Adults have to look hard, however, to

find simple puzzles that depict women in nonstereotypic roles or to find representations of nonwhites in these puzzles.)

Toys for Toddlers

As children reach toddlerhood, they begin to use a much broader range of materials. *Paints, paper, crayons, playdough*, more "complex" puzzles, and *blocks*—wooden, construction, and bristle blocks—become important materials for children's development and are easily available in a variety of stores. *Stuffed animals* in all sizes, colors, and varieties are available in nearly every toy store—and can be found in a number of stationery and grocery stores as well. It is important to make sure that the stuffed toys are well-sewn and that parts—eyes, noses, etc.—can't easily be pulled off and swallowed.

Finding quality *dolls*, however, is difficult, especially if one is looking for something other than a white doll. Most of the Black dolls tend to be white dolls with dark paint. Though there are small companies who make ethnic dolls that are sturdy, many of these dolls have not made it into stores that make them accessible to larger numbers of people. It is also difficult to find dolls that are anatomically correct.

Books for Infants and Toddlers

Books for infants and toddlers are a great disappointment compared to the toys that are available. Finding books for this age that combine a portrayal of characters in nonstereotypic ways with regard to sex, race, and ethnicity; that encourage respect for all people; and that are well constructed and interesting is nearly impossible.

Perhaps because publishers don't see the need to focus in this area, the books that are available tend to be the traditional sexist and racist ones that have been around for a long time. The cloth and plastic varieties, which in terms of material seem most appropriate for infants and young toddlers, almost never depict children or families of color. For example, the popular *Pat the Bunny*, and *The Telephone Book* and others in that series, don't reflect the realities of most children. Several European publishers—especially British ones—make a number of quality, hard cardboard books that are quite stunning in terms of construction and color. The messages, however, in both the pictures and the words imply sexism and—by exclusion—racism.

Given this situation, parents and caregivers will need to find alternative strategies in order to provide very young children with good "reading material." First, parents and caregivers are advised to make their own books—using magazine cutouts, family photographs, or ones taken at the infant-toddler center. These can be put into photo albums or pasted onto sturdy cardboard, and then covered with clear contact paper. Second, for storytelling with toddlers, good books geared toward older children can be read and adjusted to the level of each individual child. Also, parents and caregivers can retell stories they have read or heard before that seem appropriate for their children—handing down favorite tales from generation to generation.

MILLY HAWK DANIEL
Infant and Parent Educator

SELECTING AGE-APPROPRIATE TOYS FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

You can begin at birth to select toys for children that are nonsexist, multiracial/ethnic, safe, durable, and imaginative. Babies need a variety of playthings - toys that move and stimulate, toys that are soft and comforting, toys that are intellectually challenging. It is always preferable to buy (or make) a few toys in each category that are durable and of high quality than to buy many toys that may break easily.

The following list is meant to serve only as a guideline. Since children develop at their own pace, the time when a child uses and enjoys certain toys will vary according to the individual. Remember that household items make wonderful toys. Kitchen utensils, empty cartons, food containers, old magazines, egg boxes, etc., are fine for banging, stacking, filling, dumping, tearing, and all the other activities that children under three engage in as they learn about themselves and the world around them through play.

0-6 months

mobile

textured ball

radio or tape recording with
pleasant voices/gentle bell
or rattle

clear plastic ball

musical stuffed animal or other
musical toy

cloth or plastic blocks

rattles

rag doll

teething rings

cuddle toys

crib gymnasium

table toys with suction cup

unbreakable mirror

soft plastic squeeze toys

busy box

baby clutch balls

6 months - 1 year

plastic clothes pins and plastic bowl (note: no springs on clothes pins)	book of photographs of baby, family, friends
plastic blocks (large)	shiny pots and pans with lids
roly poly knockdown toys	a child's clock
nesting cups	bath toys
banging bench	pull and push toys
large wooden beads (strung and securely tied)	books of heavy cardboard or plastic
colored geometric shapes	shape sorter

1 year - 1½ years

stacking toys	sand toys
simple puzzles (one or two pieces)	pegboard and <u>large</u> pegs
riding toys	bean bags (very sturdy material securely sewn)
surprise box	

1½ years - 2 years

measuring cups and spoons (metal or <u>heavy</u> plastic cups, metal spoons)	easel, brushes, and non-toxic paints
non-toxic crayons (large)	dump truck
paper	magnetic numbers and/or letters
large heavy cardboard box open at both ends for crawling through	number and/or letter books
wooden play people (nonsexist, multiracial)	shape and color form board
beads for stringing (large)	LEGO or other stacking blocks
toy telephone	wooden blocks

1½ years - 2 years (continued)

toy camera

child's record player

story records

child's tape recorder

children's tapes

toy baby carriage or stroller

large truck for riding

tricycle

simple story books

Play Dough

transportation toys (boats,
airplanes, cars, etc.)

finger and hand puppets

water toys and basins

dolls

dress-up clothes or pieces
of fabric for pretend play
(make sure dress-up clothes
are not adult size. Larger
children's clothes work very
well. Also, be careful that
clothes and accessories are
not sex-stereotyped.)

TASK CARDS FOR CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION I:
EXPLORING SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES (ALTERNATIVE MODULE)

TASK CARD I

It is more important for a boy to continue education or training after high school than for a girl.

There is something wrong with a girl who wants to wear boys' clothes all the time.

Girls are more emotional than boys.

TASK CARD II

Taking care of babies is women's work.

Girls need less freedom than boys.

Boys of any age are physically stronger than girls.

TASK CARD III

Boys should be given more physical education opportunities than girls.

There is something wrong with a boy who wants to play with dolls.

Girls should be disciplined more leniently than boys.

TASK CARD IV

Girls are not as good as boys in math and science.

Girls need more protection than boys.

Boys are naturally more independent than girls.

TASK CARDS FOR EXPLORING CHILDREARING/CAREGIVING
SITUATIONS FOR GENDER DIFFERENCES

TASK CARD I (PARENT)

Tommy, age two, arrives at his center resplendent in a new "Superman" cape. Denise, also two, toddles up to him and says, "I want!" Tommy says, "Mine," and Denise begins to cry, repeating, "I want, I want." Tommy's mother, in an effort to comfort and distract Denise, says, "Come on, Denise, even though a girl can't be 'Superman,' you can be a beautiful ballerina. Let's go into the dress-up area and find you a costume." Denise reluctantly follows Tommy's mother into the dress-up area while Tommy goes to find Fred and Billy, his special day-care friends.

React to the gender messages in this situation.

TASK CARD II (PARENT)

Frank, who is not quite three, is just getting over the chicken pox. He is at home with his grandmother and his sister Evie, who is eighteen months old. Frank had been out of his day-care program for more than a week, and he is feeling quite restless. He is playing on the floor with all his cars and trucks. Evie is sitting in a highchair playing with her teddy bear. The doorbell rings and in walks Frank's caregiver who came to visit and bring him get-well cards from his friends. The children's grandmother takes Evie out of the highchair and sits her on the couch between herself and the visitor. When Frank's caregiver gets to play on the floor with him, Evie tries to run over and join them. Grandma, pulling her back to the couch says, "No, Evie, you stay here with me. You mustn't get dirty."

Discuss the different ways in which Grandma meets Frank's and Evie's needs as young children.

TASK CARD III (PARENT)

The following incident takes place in a center where the parents are in a training program and are able to spend their lunch hours with their children:

It is after lunch, and two-and-one-half-year-old Peter sits isolated and crying. His mother is not there. The other parents are busy taking their children into the nursery for naptime. No one is paying attention to Peter. After about five minutes, a mother comes over to him and says sympathetically, "Oh, Peter, why are you crying?" A father immediately walks over and says, "I'll teach you to write your name." Peter continues to cry while the adult amuses himself by writing Peter's name on the blackboard. The first mother returns and says, "You want me to read you a story?" The father says, "His Mommy's not here," and, to Peter, "I'll get you a book." Peter takes the book and goes to lie down for a nap.

Analyze the differences in the father's and mother's attempts to meet Peter's needs.

TASK CARD I (CAREGIVER)

A young female toddler, just learning to walk, pulls herself up to a standing position. The caregiver encourages her to walk, and says, "Oh, pretty!" when the child's lace-covered rubber pants are revealed. The child takes her first steps, and the caregiver says admiringly, "Don't you look pretty!"

Discuss the appropriateness and the implications of the caregiver's reaction to the child's accomplishment.

TASK CARD II (CAREGIVER)

The caregiver begins to clean up. She sings out, "Clean up time!" She asks the only girl in the room (23 months old) to help clean up by putting all the red, all the blue, etc. bristle blocks in the box. This little girl had been playing with the bristle blocks for the preceding five minutes, but the four boys in the room had been playing with them for about forty minutes a bit earlier. The girl works with the teacher, and the boys wander over to the bench, sit down, and wait to have their shoes put on to go outside.

Discuss the implications of this incident.

TASK CARD III (CAREGIVER)

Five toddlers, four boys and one girl, are sitting in the book corner with the two female caregivers. All four boys are gathered around one of the caregivers looking at a book of trucks. She is commenting on the trucks and asking the boys to name them. One boy becomes upset when he is not allowed to turn the page when he wants to. The caregiver with the boys' group asks the other caregiver to pass him a book of his own. She offers him The Three Little Kittens, and without waiting to see the child's reaction, the first caregiver says, "No, give him one with trucks." At the same time, the only girl in the book corner is with the second caregiver looking at a photograph album/homemade book of a class trip. She begins by leaning on the caregiver's knee while they look at pictures of children in the Center and their families. The caregiver then picks up the girl and places her on her lap while they look at a book called Babies.

Discuss the sex-role messages being transmitted to the boys and girls in this situation.

TASK CARD FOR CONTENT MODULE FOR SESSION IV:
LOOKING AT TOYS FOR SEX AND RACE STEREOTYPING

TASK CARD

Please consider the toys you have in
light of the criteria for a good toy
we just generated, and answer the
following questions:

Is the toy appropriate for all children?
(Consider both the package and the toy.)

What needs does the toy serve?

MATERIALES REPRODUCIBLES

- Definiciones Del Sexismo
- ¿Cuáles Son Los Hechos?
- Explorando Los Roles De Varón Y Hembra
- Lista De Observación (Cuidores de Niños)
- Hoja Para Observación (Madres/Padres)
- Juquetes Y Libros Para Niños/As Desde Su Nacimiento Hasta Los Tres Años
- Escogiendo Juquetes Apropriados Para Bebes Y Niños/As
- Tarjetas Para Explorar Actitudes Sobre Roles Sexuales (Módulo Alternativo)
- Tarjetas Para Explorar Situaciones De Differences Sexuales En La Crianza Y Cuidado De Los Niños/As
- Tarjetas Para Examinar Juquetes Con Respecto A Estereotipas Sexuales Y Raciales

DEFINICIONES DEL SEXISMO

El sexismo es:

Cualquier actitud, acción o estructura institucional que subordine a una persona o a un grupo a causa de su sexo.

El sexismo puede ser:

Individual, cultural, o institucional. Deliberado o involuntario.

EJEMPLOS DEL SEXISMO

El sexismo individual:

"Tiraste la pelota como una niña." "Pues, así son las mujeres al volante."
"Guillermo, carga el proyector, por favor. Y tú, Sarita, lava la pizarra." "El tiene una risita como una nena." "¿Quiere que la cobijita de bebé sea color rosa o azul?"

"El juguete de construcción es para Juanito y la muñeca Barbie es para Paquita."

El sexismo institucional:

"Esta compañía emplea y asciende a las personas con mayor experiencia." Los presidentes de industria, las juntas directivas de las universidades, los dirigentes de asociaciones médicas y los Presidentes de los Estados Unidos han sido todos, y siguen siendo, casi todos hombres (y blancos).

Las mujeres que trabajan en su promedio ganan 60% de lo que ganan los hombres que trabajan.

"Nuestro texto para la clase se llama, 'Los grandes hombres de América.'"

¿CUÁLES SON LOS HECHOS?

Nota: Doble la hoja en clos. Lea primero las afirmaciones al lado izquierda, y decida si las considera como falsas o verdaderas. Las respuestas se encuentran al pie de la tercera página. Al terminar, lea la otra mitad de la pagina para ver la documentación de los hechos.

Verdad o Falso

1. Aunque los bebés usan solo pañales, siempre se puede distinguir entre varón y hembra.
2. Al nacer, los bebés varones son más activos que las hembras.
3. Los padres reaccionan de manera diferente a la inquietud en un bebé varón y en un bebé hembra.
4. Las madres amamantan a las hembras y a los varones de manera diferente.

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Los Hechos

Si los bebés no usan ninguna ropa que dé un indicio de su sexo, no es posible saber su sexo. En un estudio de un bebé llamado 'X,' a un grupo de adultos se les dijo que el bebé en la película era varoncito, y a otro grupo se les dijo que era hembra. Ninguno de los grupos tuvo dificultad en encontrar características en el bebé que coincidieran con su idea de que era varón o hembra; en algunas ocasiones, los grupos interpretaron la misma conducta de manera diferente según su idea en cuanto al sexo del bebé.

Laura S. Sidorowicz, "Baby X Revisited," Sex Roles 6:1, 1980.

El nivel de actividad de los bebés, incluyendo los movimientos del cuerpo, la acción de chupar, etc., no tiene correlación con las diferencias de sexo. Hay algunos varones y algunas hembras que se identifican como especialmente activos, tranquilos, intranquilos, etc.

Nancy Romer, The Sex-Role Cycle: Socialization from Infancy to Old Age. (Old Westbury, N.Y.: The Feminist Press, 1981).

La inquietud de un bebé de tres meses provoca respuestas diferentes según el sexo del bebé. A las hembras se les habla, se les imita, y se les mira; los bebés varones reciben contacto físico muy cercano.

Shirley Weitz, Sex Roles: Biological, Psychological and Social Foundations (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

Los estudios han demostrado que las madres respetan más los ritmos propios del bebé si es varón; con las hembras toman la actitud de 'mamá lo sabe todo.'

Lois Barclay Murphy, The Widening World of Childhood: Paths Toward Mastery (New York: Basic Books, 1962).

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5. Después de nacido, los padres describen al bebé de manera diferente según su sexo.

6. Los varones recién-nacidos son físicamente más robustos que las hembras recién-nacidas.

7. Los papás tienden a jugar de manera brusca con los hijos más que con las hijas; suelen más decierles a sus hijas que son muy bonitas.

8. En cuanto los niños empiezan verdaderamente a jugar con juguetes, las niñas naturalmente elegirán muñecas y otros juguetes suaves, mientras que los niños naturalmente elegirán coches y otros juguetes mecánicos.

9. Los papás están menos capacitados que las mamás para cuidar a los recién-nacidos.

Inmediatamente después del nacimiento de su bebé, los padres describen e interpretan la conducta de su infante según líneas estereotípicas sexuales. A las hijas las describen como más dulces, de rasgos más finos, más pequeñas, y más atentas; los hijos son considerados como más inquietos, de facciones más grandes, mejor coordinados, más despiertos, más fuertes, y más resistentes. A las hijas recién-nacidas se les tiende a describir como bellas, bonitas, o graciosas, o chulas, más que a los hijos recién-nacidos.

La diferencias de peso entre hembras y varones es estadísticamente variable. Los bebés varones son más vulnerables a problemas físicos en-útero y padecen más que las bebés hembras de trastornos congénitos.

Ann Oakley, Sex, Gender and Society (New York: Harper and Row, 1972).

Los estudios demuestran que los papás, a través de sus comentarios y las formas en que juegan, estereotipan a su prole más que las mamás.

Ross D. Parke, Fathers (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980).

Esta no es una elección "natural," ya que los padres animan a sus hijos e hijas a jugar con juguetes "apropiados" para varón o hembra. Jean Piaget, psicólogo infantil y pedagogo, ha demostrado que si un niño o una niña tiene alguna experiencia con un objeto y se siente más cómodo(a) con éste, entonces elegirá explorar aquel objeto aún más y volverá con gusto a jugar con él.

Jean Piaget, The Origins of Intelligence (New York: International Universities Press, 1952).

Los papás, y los hombres en general, frecuentemente se sienten incompetentes en el cuidado de los recién-nacidos, pero las destrezas necesarias se pueden aprender si lo quieren. Su sentimiento de incapacidad se debe mayormente a su falta de experiencia. Los estudios han demostrado que los papás que son el principal responsable son muy competentes y cariñosos con

sus bebés.

Ross D. Parke, Fathers (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980).

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127 Respuestas: 1. Falso. 2. Falso. 3. Verdad.
4. Verdad 5. Verdad. 6. Falso
7. Verdad. 8. Falso. 9. Falso

Preparado por Beginning Equal: The Project on Nonsexist Childrearing for Infants and Toddlers.

EXPLORANDO LOS ROLES DE
VARÓN Y HEMBRA

	En Acuerdo	En Desacuerdo	Sin Opinión
1. Los varones de cualquier edad son físicamente más fuertes que las hembras.			
2. Algo anda mal en un varón que se interese por la moda.			
3. A los niños varones hay que estimularlos a que sean atléticos.			
4. Las niñas no son tan buenas como los niños en matemáticas y ciencias.			
5. Algo anda mal con los niños varones que quieren cuidar a los bebés y a otros niños.			
6. Es más importante para los varones continuar su educación o capacitación después de la secundaria que para las hembras.			
7. A las niñas hay que disciplinarlas más indulgentemente que a los niños.			
8. A las niñas les gusta chismear más que a los niños.			
9. Los niños son por naturaleza más independientes que las niñas.			
10. Los niños deben tener más oportunidades de educación física que las niñas.			
11. Las niñas deben aprender a cocinar, a coser, y a cuidar la casa.			
12. Las niñas requieren menos libertad que los niños.			
13. Las niñas requieren mayor protección que los niños.			
14. Las niñas son más emotivas que los niños.			
15. Los niños no tienen por que aprender a cocinar, a coser, ni a cuidar la casa.			
16. A un bebé varón que se inquieta y que llora se le debe dejar llorar.			
17. Algo anda mal con una niña que siempre quiere llevar ropa de niño.			
18. Algo anda mal con un niño varón que quiere jugar con muñecas.			

EXPLORANDO LOS ROLES DE
VARON Y HEMBRA

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	En Acuerdo	En Desacuerdo	Sin Opinion
19. El cuidado de los bebés es trabajo de mujer.			
20. Las niñas deben ser lindas y "sexy."			
21. Es mejor separar a los varones y las hembras en las escuelas.			

LISTA DE OBSERVACIÓN (Cuidadores de niños)

ASPECTOS TÍPICOS DE UN AMBIENTE DE CUIDADO DE INFANTES Y NIÑOS/AS			QUIÉNES ESTAN USANDO ESTOS MATERIALES EN SU CENTRO	
MATERIALES Y ÁREAS	ACTIVIDADES	CAPACIDADES DESARROLLADAS	NIÑAS	NIÑOS
Estantes bajos para juguetes	explorar sin ayuda de adultos e iniciar su propio aprendizaje	independencia y un sentido de autonomía		
Mesitas y sillitas de tamaño apropiado	sentarse y pararse sin ayuda (los muebles son justos para su tamaño)	independencia y autonomía; afirma el crecimiento de los niños/as		
Algunos muebles para adultos	ver a sus padres usarlos cómodamente; subirse y bajarse como lo harían los niños/as en casa	comunica que los padres son parte del centro; crea ambiente casero		
Sillas altas cerca de las mesas	los niños/as en sillas-altas comen juntos con los niños/as en las sillas bajas	desarrolla una unidad social que incluye a todos		
Área agradable para la muda de pañales; más de un excusado	se hablan entre sí y con los adultos; se divierten juntos	les da buenos sentimientos con respecto a ellos mismos y sus cuerpos		
Área separada para dormir	los niños/as tienen todos diferentes horarios; algunos/as duermen mientras otros juegan	reconoce diferencias individuales		
Materiales (reales o de tamaño para niño) para el juego dramático	adiestrarse abriendo y cerrando; poniéndose y quitándose la ropa; imitando a los adultos	les permite explorar los rasgos físicos de los materiales y experimentar con roles adultos		
Cubos y otras materias para construcción	amontonar, tumbar, y transportar cubos	les permite explorar los rasgos físicos de los materiales; aprender sobre el equilibrio, la gravedad; les ayuda a adquirir sentido de competencia		

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LISTA DE OBSERVACIÓN (Cuidadores de niños)

ASPECTOS TÍPICOS DE UN AMBIENTE DE CUIDADO DE INFANTES Y NIÑOS/AS			QUIÉNES ESTÁN USANDO ESTOS MATERIALES EN SU CENTRO	
MATERIALES Y AREAS	ACTIVIDADES	CAPACIDADES DESARROLLADAS	NINAS	NIÑOS
Materiales artísticos	empezar usando las pinturas y el pegamento al azar y poco a poco desarrollar sus propios procesos	les enseña que no hay una respuesta correcta; les permite explorar las propiedades físicas de los materiales		
Equipo para actividad física	treparse, resbalar, mecerse	les da buenos sentimientos con respecto a sus cuerpos; desarrollo a la competencia física		
Ilustraciones en las paredes de personas, alimentos, animales	señalarlos y hablar de ellos	desarrolla el lenguaje; desarrollo de destrezas sociales		

Traducido de Equal Play, Tómo III, Números 3 y 4, verano-otoño 1982.
Alliance, Inc., 370 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017.

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HOJA PARA OBSERVACIÓN (Madres/Padres)

Una situación en la que mi conducta con mi hija/o contrarió la estereotipificación de los roles sexuales:

Una situación en que mi conducta con mi hijo/a reforzó la estereotipificación de los roles sexuales:

JUGUETES Y LIBROS PARA NIÑOS/AS DESDE SU NACIMIENTO HASTA LOS TRES AÑOS

Se podría sostener que los niños/as menores de tres años en realidad no necesitan juguetes "formales." Desde luego, no necesitan juguetes complicados y caros. Sin embargo, dado que los adultos (madres, padres, cuidadores) probablemente siempre querrán comprarles juguetes a los niños/as, visité las tiendas de juguetes y libros infantiles en Nueva York para ver lo que habría disponible con respecto a objetos no sexistas y no racistas para bebés y niños/as chiquititos/as.

Una cosa que me preocupaba era si existía alguna diferencia importante entre los tipos de juguetes que se podían comprar en diferentes tipos de establecimientos. Así que visité varios tipos de tiendas en la ciudad de Nueva York, incluyendo tiendas caras (Penny Whistle, FAO Schwartz, Toy Park); tiendas de juguetes de segunda mano (Peanut Gallery, Play it Again); almacenes grandes (Gimbels, Macys); tiendas de variedad (Lamstons, Woolworths); papelerías; departamentos de libro en las jugueterías; y librerías adultas y para niños/as. Encontré que es posible encontrar juguetes apropiados y variados para bebés y niños/as chicos/as en casi todas las tiendas que visité (en cuanto a los libros, es un caso diferente), pero son necesarias algunas advertencias antes de empezar a comprar.

Advertencias con respecto a las compras

Pasando por las jugueterías, me afectaron mucho los mensajes racistas y sexistas del empaquetaje o la envoltura de los juguetes para bebés y niños/as chicos/as. Para la mayoría de los niños/as, los mensajes de estas cajas les dicen, "Este juguete no es para ti!" Igual que en el caso de los juguetes para niños/as mayorcitos/as, uno tiene la clara impresión según las cajas que la mayoría de los juguetes están destinados a los varones blancos. Las hembras y los niños/as de color pocas veces aparecen, con la excepción de las cajas que contienen muñecas y en ese caso toman poses pasivas.

Ya que ésta es la regla, es importante notar que la única excepción es la Johnson y Johnson. Esta marca de juguetes, que están relacionados a las etapas del desarrollo infantil, sobresale. Los niños/as que aparecen en las cajas son hembras y varones, y hay niños/as negros, hispanos, asiáticos, además de blancos. Los juguetes vienen acompañados de un folleto para los padres sobre el desarrollo infantil, con sugerencias sobre las mejores formas de usar los juguetes en las varias etapas.

Con la excepción de estos juguetes de J y J, les recomiendo a los padres que le hagan caso a las advertencias de muchos otros que han preferido tirar el paquete que contiene el juguete y re-envolverlo antes de dárselo al niño/a. O comprar uno de los muchos juguetes para bebés y niños/as chicos/as, como los aros dentales y los juguetes para empujar, que vienen sin ningún tipo de embalaje.

Otra cosa importante con respecto al embalaje: Mucho cuidado con lo que imprimen en cada paquete con respecto a la "edad sugerida" para el uso. Aunque uno puede usar esas sugerencias como guía, no habría que tomarlas como absolutas. Es mucho más importante observar a su hija/o para asegurarse de cuales serían los juguetes más apropiados para dada edad. Por ejemplo, las llamadas "cajas de actividades" para las cunas muestran a un bebé de unos nueve meses en la caja. A menos que un adulto la estimulara, mi hija nunca jugó con su "caja de actividades" hasta que tuvo tres o cuatro años, cuando la usó como un portafolio de mentiritas y la anduvo cargando por la manija.

Los niños/as no brincan de un juguete a otro a la edad apropiada; se

resbalan hacia otra "etapa" en la medida en que su experiencia y su interés se lo permitan. Los adultos que compran juguetes y otros materiales para los niños/as harían mejor -- en relación con sus niños/as y con su cartera también-- si eligieran juguetes y materiales que tienen un potencial a largo plazo y que se pueden usar de varias maneras distintas en las diferentes etapas del desarrollo de los niños/as. Los juguetes que se pueden usar de una sola manera limitan mucho.

Sin embargo, el solo hecho de que un juguete le parezca inapropiado -- o sexista o racista -- no significa que obligadamente hay que botarlo. Antes de hacer esto, examínalo para ver si tiene algún potencial. Por ejemplo, en una juguetería yo ví un juego interesante de cubos de madera para amontonar y encajar. La madera, envuelta en plástico transparente, parecía de buena calidad. Pero los dibujos pegados a cada lado de los cubos eran terribles. Había sólo personas blancas: niños corriendo detrás de perros y tirando pelotas y niñas jugando con muñecas o sentadas al lado de puentes mirando los lagos y los ríos. Sería fácil remplazar esos dibujos con fotografías o recortes de revistas, creando así un juguete no estereotipado sin tener que cortar pedazos de madera para que encajen perfectamente el uno dentro del otro.

Las siguientes descripciones informan sobre los muchos tipos de juguetes que se encuentran fácilmente en una variedad de tiendas.

Juguetes para bebés

Existen muchos aros dentales de alta calidad, de formas, diseños y materiales variados -- de madera, plásticos duros, y goma. Y aunque algunos son rosados o azules, también hay muchos en otros colores y en maderas naturales. Es el mismo caso con las sonajas. Aunque muchas de éstas vienen con listones en los colores tradicionales, éstos se pueden fácilmente quitar. Abundan los móviles -- algunos musicales, otros no -- muchos con formas de animales en varios colores y patrones colgando. (Cuidado con los que ilustran los versos infantiles sexistas). Uno de los más "modernos" tiene las formas de la luna, las estrellas y el sol en un material brillante y sedoso y en colores fuertes. Otro diseño reciente, de manufactura sueca, es un juego que viene con un fuerte palo rojo (uno para suspender el móvil encima de la cuna, otro que cabe en una cuna portátil o una cama más pequeña) y una serie de móviles diferentes y otros juguetes de cuna que se pueden comprar por separado para colgarlos del palo horizontal en la etapa apropiada del desarrollo del bebé.

También para la cuna hay una variedad de cajas de actividades que pueden colgarse del lado de la cuna o, más tarde cuando el niño juega en el piso, se pueden usar allí también. Estas cajas contienen una variedad de actividades -- campanas que sonar, un pequeño espejo, cosas que se pueden jalar y empujar, y otras que hacen sonidos distintos. (Como antes se ha notado, frecuentemente he encontrado que a los niños/as mayorcitos les gusta este juguete también, por la manija que les permite cargarlo fácilmente.)

Juguetes para bebés más grandes

En la medida en que el bebé avance de la cuna y los brazos adultos al ganeo por el piso, hay varios juguetes para atraer su atención. Pelotas de plástico y goma -- algunas que contienen cosas interesantes -- se van rodando suavemente justo fuera del alcance del niño/a cuando les da golpecitos, lo cual estimula al pequeño/a a gatear detrás de la pelota. Un juguete de plástico en forma de donas para apilar en colores vibrantes tienen muchas posibilidades. Las formas se van rodando, flotan en el agua, y también pueden ser mordidas y chupadas. Más adelante, se pueden meter sobre el palo de plástico para apilarlas en orden y luego deshacer la pila, y se pueden guardar en un

balde que se puede llenar y vaciar.

Una gran variedad de juguets para empujar y jalar también existen. Generalmente son de madera o de plástico, a veces con música, otras veces sin música. Frecuentemente, sin embargo, uno tiene la impresión de que muchos de los juguetes de madera están diseñados más para el placer estético de los padres que para el entretenimiento de los niños/as. Uno de los problemas con los juguetes que se jalan es que los niños/as tienen constantemente que mirar hacia atrás para observar la acción y, por lo tanto, tienen que acordarse de mirar hacia adelante de vez en cuando para ver hacia adónde van. Los niños/as que recién han aprendido a caminar tienen más facilidad con los juguetes que se empujan, que generalmente tienen fuertes palos de plástico o de madera conectados a forma de animales u otras cosas interesantes en el otro extremo del palo. Uno de los más populares es el "popper." Este juguete tiene un hemisfero de plástico encerrado que contiene bolitas de plástico que brincan y hacen ruido cuando se empuja el juguete. Otros juguetes para empujar tienen trenes con ruedas que se mueven y patos con patas que se sacuden al empujar empujarse el juguete.

Las cajas para clasificar también se encuentran de plástico o de madera de muchas compañías. Algunas ofrecen sólo unas pocas formas para encajar en los agujeros apropiados en un solo lado de la caja, y otras son más complicadas con más formas y más agujeros en los que encajarlas. La mayoría de las jugueterías tienen una variedad de juguets acuáticos -- desde los sencillos peces de plástico hasta las más elaboradas ranas que "cazan" renacuajos en el agua. Los barquitos y otros juguetes que flotan se encuentran en todas partes, en versiones muy elegantes en las tiendas caras y en versiones más sencillas, menos caras pero igualmente buenas en tiendas como Woolworths y Lamstons.

Varias tiendas tienen una variedad de rompecabezas muy sencillos en formas de animales. (Los adultos tienen, sin embargo, que buscar mucho antes de encontrar rompecabezas sencillos que enseñen mujeres en papeles no estereotipados o a personas de color).

Juguets para niños/as

Cuando los niños/as llegan a la edad de 2 años más o menos (cuando empiezan a caminar, aunque sea bambalearse), empiezan a usar una gama más amplia de materiales. Las pinturas, el papel, los crayones, la "masa de jugar: (playdough), los rompecabezas y los cubos más "complejos" -- cubos de madera, de construcción y otros -- se vuelven materiales importantes para el desarrollo del niño/a y se consiguen fácilmente en una variedad de tiendas. Los animales de peluche de todo tamaño, color y variedad se encuentran en casi toda juguetería -- y también se consiguen en muchas papelerías y tiendas de alimentos. Es importante asegurarse de que estos animalitos estén bien cosidos y que las partes -- los ojos, las narices, etc. -- no se puedan arrancar y tragar.

Es difícil, sin embargo, encontrar muñecas de calidad, especialmente si uno está buscando algo que no sea una muñeca blanca. La mayoría de las muñecas negras tienden a ser muñecas blancas pintadas de "negro." Aunque hay pequeñas compañías que fabrican muñecas "étnicas" bien hechas, muchas de éstas no se consiguen. También es difícil encontrar muñecas que sean correctas anatómicamente.

Libros para bebés y niños/as chicos/as

Los libros para bebés y niños/as chicos/as son una gran decepción, comparados con los juguetes disponibles. Encontrar libros para esta edad que

combinen una presentación de personajes no estereotipados con respecto al sexo, la raza y la etnicidad; que estimulen respeto para todo el mundo; y que estén bien contruidos y sean interesantes es casi imposible.

Será porque las editoriales no ven la necesidad de enfocarse en esta área, y así los libros que se pueden conseguir tienden a ser los libros tradicionales que son sexistas y racistas y que llevan muchos años entre nosotros. Las variaciones de tela y de plástico, que en cuanto a material sí parecen ser más apropiadas para los bebés y niños/as chicos/as, casi nunca muestran a niños/as o familias de color. Por ejemplo, los populares Pat the Bunny y The Telephone Book y otros en esa serie, ni siquiera reflejan las realidades de la mayoría de los niños/as. Varias editoriales europeas -- especialmente británicas -- producen gran número de libros de cartón grueso y de alta calidad que en cuanto a construcción y color son preciosos. Los mensajes, sin embargo, tanto en las imágenes como en las palabras, encierran en sí actitudes sexistas y, porque, excluyen a personas de color, racistas.

Dada esta situación, los padres y los/las cuidadores de niños/as tendrán que encontrar estrategias diferentes para proporcionarles a los niños/as chicos/as buenos "materiales de lectura." En primer lugar, se sugiere que hagan sus propios libros -- usando recortes de revistas, fotos de la familia, o fotos tomadas en el centro infantil. Se pueden pegar el álbumes para fotos o sobre cartón fuerte, que luego se cubre con un plástico transparente. En segundo lugar, para leerles cuentos a los niños/as, se pueden usar buenos libros para niños/as mayores ajustándolos al nivel de cada niño/a.

Además, los padres y los cuidadores pueden recontar oralmente los cuentos que han leído u oído antes de que aparezcan apropiados para sus niños -- así pueden transmitir de una generación a otra los cuentos favoritos.

Milly Hawk Daniel
Educador de bebés y niños/as chicos/as

Traducido de Equal Play, Tomo III, Números 3 y 4, verano-otoño de 1982. Women's Action Alliance, Inc., 370 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017.

ESCOGIENDO JUGUETES APROPIADOS PARA BEBES Y NIÑOS/AS

Se puede comenzar desde el nacimiento del bebé escogiendo juguetes para niños/as que sean no sexistas, multi- raciales y multi-étnicos, seguros, durables e imaginativos. Los bebés necesitan una variedad de juguetes -- juguetes que muevan y estimulen, juguetes que sean suaves y reconfortantes, juguetes que sean intelectualmente intrigantes. Siempre es preferible comprar (o hacer) unos pocos juguetes en cada categoría que sean durables y de alta calidad, en vez de comprar muchos juguetes que puedan romperse fácilmente.

Sigue una lista que debe servir simplemente como guía. Ya que los niños/as se desarrollan a su propio ritmo, el momento en que un niño o una niña usa y disfruta de ciertos juguetes variará según el individuo. Recuerde que los objetos caseros pueden ser juguetes maravillosos. Los utensilios de la cocina, cartones vacíos, envases de alimentos, revistas viejas, cartones de huevo, etc., sirven muy bien para golpear, amontonar, llenar, vaciar, romper, y todas las demás actividades en las que los niños/as menores de tres años se ocupan mientras aprenden sobre ellos mismos y el mundo que los rodea mediante el juego.

0-6 meses

móvil

radio o grabación con voces agradables/campana gentil o sonaja

animal de peluche con música u otro juguete musical

sonajas

aro dental

gimnasio de cuna

espejo no rompible

caja de actividades

pelota texturada

pelota de plástico

cubos de tela o plástico

muñeca de trapo

juguetes para tener en brazos

juguetes de mesa con copa de succión

juguetes plásticos (blanditos)

pelota infantil para agarrar

6 meses - 1 año

pinzas para tender ropa y tazón de plástico (sin resorte)

cubos plásticos (grandes)

juguete para golpear y tumbar

copas redondas para encajar

banco para golpear

cuentas grandes de madera
formas geométricas en colores
ollas brillosas con tapas
un reloj infantil
libro de fotografías del bebé
familias y amistades
libros de cartón o plástico
juguetes para el baño
juguetes para jalar y empujar
caja para clasificar formas

1 año - 1½ años

juguetes para amontonar
rompecabezas sencillos
juguetes para montar
caja de sorpresas
juguetes para avena
tablilla para clavijas de madera
bolso llenado con abichuelas

1½ años - 2 años

tazas y cucharas de medición (de metal o
plástico fuerte)
crayones grandes y no-tóxicos
papel
caja de cartón grande para entrar y salir
gateando
personas de madera (no sexista, multiracial)
cuentas grandes para ensartar
teléfono infantil
cámara infantil
tocadiscos infantil
discos de historias infantiles
grabadora infantil
grabaciones para niños/as
coche infantil
camión grande
triciclo
camión de volquete

caballete de pintar, pinceles, y pinturas
no tóxicas

números magnéticos

libro de números

figuras de forma y color en tablilla

cubos LEGO

cubos de madera

libros de cuentos sencillos

masa para jugar (Play Dough)

barcos y aviones

títeres de manos y dedos

mesa con recipiente ancho para juego
de agua

muñecas

ropa de grandes, tela, para disfraces

TARJETAS PARA EXPLORAR ACTITUDES SOBRE ROLES SEXUALES
(MÓDULO ALTERNATIVO)

TARJETA I

Es más importante para los varones continuar su educación o capacitación después de la secundaria que para las hembras.

Algo anda mal con una niña que siempre quiere llevar ropa de niño.

Las niñas son más emotivas que los niños.

TARJETA II

El cuidado de los bebés es trabajo de mujer.

Las niñas requieren menos libertad que los niños.

Los varones de cualquier edad son físicamente más fuertes que las hembras.

TARJETA III

Los niños deben tener más oportunidades de educación física que las niñas.

Algo anda mal con un niño varón que quiere jugar con muñecas.

A las niñas hay que disciplinarlas más indulgentemente que a los niños.

TARJETA IV

Las niñas no són tan buenas como los niños en matemáticas y ciencias.

Las niñas requieren mayor protección que los niños.

Los niños són por naturaleza más independientes que las niñas.

TARJETAS PARA EXPLORAR SITUACIONES DE
DIFERENCIAS SEXUALES EN
LA CRIANZA Y CUIDADO DE LOS NIÑOS/AS

TARJETA I (MADRE/PADRE)

Tomasito, de dos años, llega a su centro infantil luciendo una nueva capa de "Superman." Denise, que también tiene dos años, se tambalea hacia él y dice, "¡Quiero!" Tomás dice, "mío," y Denise empieza a llorar, repitiendo, "Quiero, quiero." La mamá de Tomás le dice a Denise, "Vaya, Denise, aunque una niña no puede ser Superman, tú sí puedes ser una bella bailarina. Vente al área de disfraces y te encontraremos uno de bailarina." Desganadamente Denise sigue a la mamá de Tomás hacia los disfraces, mientras que Tomás va a encontrar a Federico y Guillermo, sus amigos especiales.

Reaccione a los mensajes sobre el rol sexual en esta situación.

TARJETA II (PADRE/MADRE)

Francisco, que aún no cumple los tres años, se está reponiendo de la varicela. Está en casa con su abuelita y su hermana Evita, que tiene año y medio. Francisco ha faltado a su programa infantil por más de una semana, y se siente muy inquieto. Está jugando en el piso con sus cochecitos y camiones. Evita está sentada en su silla-alta jugando con su osito. Alguien toca a la puerta y entra la persona que cuida a Francisco en su centro, trayéndole tarjetitas de todos sus amigos. La abuela saca a Evita de su silla-alta y la sienta en el sofá entre ella misma y la visita. Cuando ésta se levanta para jugar en el piso con Francisco, Evita trata de bajarse del sofá para ir a jugar con ellos. La abuela, volviéndola a sentar en el sofá, le dice, "No, Evita, quédate aquí conmigo. No quiero que te ensucies."

TARJETA III (MADRE/PADRE)

El siguiente incidente ocurre en un centro en que los padres están en un programa de entrenamiento y pueden pasar la hora de almuerzo con sus hijos/as:

Es después del almuerzo, y Pedrito, de dos años y medio está sentado solo, llorando. Su madre no está. Los demás padres están ocupados llevando a sus niños/as al cuarto cuna para la siesta. Nadie le hace caso a Pedrito. Después de unos cinco minutos, una mamá se le acerca y le dice cariñosamente, "Ay, Pedrito, ¿por qué lloras?" Inmediatamente un papá se le acerca y le dice, "Te enseñaré a escribir tu nombre." Pedro sigue llorando mientras el papá se divierte escribiendo el nombre de Pedro en la pizarra. La primera mamá vuelve y le dice, "¿Quieres que te lea un cuento?" El papá dice, "Su mamá no está," y a Pedro le dice, "Te traeré un libro." Pedro toma el libro y se va a tomar la siesta.

Analice las diferencias entre los esfuerzos del padre y de la madre para atender a las necesidades de Pedrito.

TARJETA I (CUIDADORES)

Una niña chica, que apenas está aprendiendo a caminar, se agarra de algo para pararse solita. La cuidadora la alienta a que camine, y le dice, "Ay, ¡qué bonita!" cuando se revelan los calzoncitos de hule cubiertos de encaje. La niña toma sus primeros pasos, y la cuidadora le dice admirada, "¡Qué bonita te ves!"

Hable de lo apropiado o no apropiado de las reacciones de la cuidadora ante el logro de la niña.

TARJETA II (CUIDADORES)

La cuidadora empieza a limpiar el cuarto. Anuncia, "¡es la hora de recoger!" A la única niña en el cuarto (de 23 meses) le pide que le ayude a guardar todos los cubos rojos, azules, etc. en la caja. Esta niña ha estado jugando con los cubos durante los anteriores cinco minutos, pero los cuatro niños varones en el cuarto habían estado jugando con ellos durante los 40 minutos anteriores. La niña trabaja con la cuidadora y los niños se sientan en el banquito, y esperan a que se les ate los zapatos.

Hable de las implicaciones de este incidente.

TARJETA III (CUIDADORES)

Cinco niños chicos, cuatro varones y una hembra, están sentados en el rincón de los libros con dos maestras. Los cuatro niños están cerca de una de las maestras, mirando un libro de camiones. Ella está comentando sobre los camiones y preguntándoles a los niños los nombres de cada uno. Un niño se molesta cuando no se le permite volver la página cuando él lo quiere. La maestra con el grupo de niños le pide a la otra maestra que le pase otro libro al niño. Ella le ofrece Los Tres Gatitos, y sin esperar la reacción del niño, la primera maestra le dice, "No, dale uno con camiones." A la vez, la única niña en el rincón de los libros está con la segunda maestra mirando un álbum fotográfico que hicieron después de un viaje que hizo la clase. Empieza reclinándose en la rodilla de la maestra mientras miran las fotos de los niños en el centro y sus familias. La maestra toma a la niña y la sienta en sus piernas mientras miran un libro llamado Bebés.

Hable de los mensajes con respecto a rol sexual transmitidos a los niños y la niña en esta situación.

TARJETAS PARA EXAMINAR JUGUETES CON RESPECTO A ESTEREOTIPOS
SEXUALES Y RACIALES

TARJETA

Considere, por favor, los juguetes que tiene a la luz de los criterios para un buen juguete que acabamos de generar, y conteste las siguientes preguntas:

¿El juguete es apropiado para todos los niños?
(Tome en cuenta tanto el paquete como el juguete.)

¿A qué necesidades responde el juguete?

EVALUATION TOOLS

- Participant Reactions
- Attendance
- Leader Comments

PARTICIPANT REACTIONS

Position: Parent () Caregiver () Other _____ Sex: F () M ()
(describe)

Date _____

Ages of your own children _____ Age range of the children you work with _____

1. Did you gain new insights from today's workshop about how to help children grow up free from stereotypes? YES () SOMEWHAT () NO ()

Explain: _____

2. As a result of today's workshop, are you likely to take new steps to help children grow up free from stereotypes? YES () SOMEWHAT () NO ()

Explain: _____

3. Do you think you will face problems in taking these steps? YES () SOMEWHAT () NO ()

Explain: _____

4. Other thoughts, concerns, comments:

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ATTENDANCE

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Date _____

Name (please print)

Affiliation/Position

Address (include city,
state, zip)

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3.			
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18.			
19.	154		
20.			

LEADER COMMENTS

Trainers _____ Date of workshop _____
_____ Length of workshop _____

Where workshop took place _____

Approximate no. of female participants _____ male participants _____

Racial/ethnic composition of group _____

ATTACH ANY WRITTEN OUTLINE USED FOR WORKSHOP: LIST OF MODULES WHERE APPLICABLE.

1. Did you make any changes from what had been planned for this workshop?

If yes, describe. _____

2. How would you describe the tone of the workshop?

Positive() Negative() Active involvement by participants() Resistance()

Other _____

3. Did any parts of the workshop go particularly well? If yes, describe.

4. Are there any parts of the workshop that should have been changed?

If yes, describe. _____

5. Additional comments, suggestions. _____

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EVALUACIONES

- Reacciones de los Participants
- Asistencia
- Comentarios del Entrenador

REACCIONES DE LOS PARTICIPANTES

Posición: Madre/Padre() Cuidador() Otro _____ Sexo: Varón() Hembra()
(describa)

Edades de sus niños/as _____ Gama de edades de los niños/as con quienes trabaja _____

1. ¿Adquirió nueva comprensión del curso de hoy sobre cómo ayudar a que los niños/as crezcan libres de estereotipos? Sí() Algo() No()

Explique: _____

2. Como resultado de este cursillo, ¿cree usted que va a tomar nuevos pasos para ayudar a los niños/as a crecer libres de estereotipos? Sí() Algo() No()

Explique: _____

3. ¿Cree usted que enfrentará problemas al tomar estos pasos? Sí() Algo() No()

Explique: _____

4. Comentarios, ideas, preocupaciones:

ASISTENCIA
Fecha _____

Nombre (en letra de molde)

Afiliación/Posición

Dirección (ciudad, estado, zona)

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20.	159		

COMENTARIOS DEL ENTRENADOR

Entrenadores _____ Fecha del cursillo _____

_____ Duración _____

¿Dónde tuvo lugar el cursillo? _____

Número aproximado de participantes mujeres _____ hombres _____

Composición racial/étnica del grupo _____

ADJUNTE CUALQUIER PUNTEO ESCRITO USADO EN EL CURSILLO: LISTA DE MÓDULOS, SI LAS HAY.

1. ¿Hubo algún cambio de lo que había sido planeado para este cursillo? Si contesta que sí, describa. _____

2. ¿Cómo describiría el tono del cursillo?

Positivo() Negativo() Participación activa de todos() Resistencia()

Otro _____

3. ¿Hubo partes del cursillo que tuvieron éxito especial? Si las hubo, descríbalas.

4. ¿Hay partes del cursillo que debían haberse cambiado? Si las hay, descríbalas.

5. Comentarios, sugerencias. _____

REFERENCE MATERIALS

- Resources
- Statement on Homosexuality
- Background Readings

RESOURCE MATERIALS: AN ANNOTATED LIST FOR
INFANT CHILD-CARE CENTERS

During the pilot-testing of Project Beginning Equal, a box of materials was assembled and given to each participating center. This "resource box" contains childrearing books, bibliographies, records, posters, and background readings which provide an ongoing source of information about nonsexist childrearing for parents and caregivers. Following is an annotated listing of the resource materials. The print materials are included in the Reference Materials section of this manual.

Print Materials

Equal Play, Volume III, Nos. 3 & 4, Summer-Fall, 1982, 28 pp.
Women's Action Alliance, Inc., Non-Sexist Child Development Project.

This special issue is devoted to Beginning Equal: The Project on Nonsexist Childrearing for Infants and Toddlers (BE), whose main goal is to help parents and other caregivers of infants and toddlers raise the next generation of children free of bias due to sex, race, and disability. Articles written by the BE staff examine how sex-role stereotypes develop during the first three years of life. Caregiver behavior, the child-care environment, toys and books, and special issues concerning teen parents are explored.

"An Equal Approach," in Mother's Manual, January-February, 1982.
Marion O'Brien, 2pp.

This article discusses how parents are affected by social stereotypes of proper behavior of children and how awareness of these attitudes, combined with applying a single standard of child behavior, can lead to a greater equality of development for boys and girls.

"The Cues We Don't Question: Unintentional Gender Socialization in a Day Care Facility," in Day Care and Early Education, Summer, 1981. Melanie Booth-Butterfield, 2 pp.

This article reflects on the importance of teacher behavior toward children in conveying sex-role attitudes. Independence training, touching, guidance toward play objects, rewards, and reinforcements are some areas explored. A short bibliography follows the article.

"These Kids Today," in Non-Sexist Childraising, Beacon Press, 1977. Carrie Carmichael, 13 pp.

This article stresses the challenges and advantages involved in trying to raise children in nonsexist ways. It describes parents' efforts to raise their children to be anti-sexist and discusses issues faced by today's children brought about by changing views of what is acceptable behavior for males and females.

"X: A Fabulous Child's Story," in Ms. Magazine, December, 1972.
Lois Gould, 5 pp.

A short story that reveals how adult behavior toward children depends on knowing their sex and creatively shows the importance placed on sex roles by institutions in dealing with children. It points out the fuller range of development possible by rejecting traditional stereotypes, and assures readers that children are strengthened, not weakened, by learning to become involved in a range of activities regardless of sex.

"How to Buy Children's Toys That Reflect Your Values," in Essence magazine, November, 1981. Geraldine Wilson, 2 pp.

This article explores the importance of toys in reflecting values and provides guidelines for evaluating toys both from the standpoint of sturdiness and their ability to affirm and help strengthen a child's self-concept.

"Making Nonsexist, Multicultural Books and Toys for Very Young Children," Rachel Theilheimer, 5 pp.

One way to fill in the gap created by the lack of available good quality nonsexist, multiracial books and toys for very young children is to make your own. These tested and illustrated instructions are for use by parents, caregivers, and other day-care personnel interested in creating handmade materials.

Books

Infant and Child Care, A Guide to Education in Group Settings, William Fowler, 1980. Allyn & Bacon, Boston. 429 pages.

Aimed at supervisors, teachers, and day-care workers as well as students of early childhood development, this textbook is divided into four parts. Beginning with human development theory, the book goes on to discuss day-care activities, early childhood activity, and models for carrying out learning and development in day-care settings. The author's awareness of the needs of children from many different cultural and economic environments makes the book particularly valuable.

Growing Up Free, Letty Cottin Pogrebin, 1980. McGraw-Hill, Inc. 641 pages.

A comprehensive feminist view of issues involved in raising nonsexist children in the 1980s. Topics discussed include myths about sex roles, self and parent, family feelings, friendship, media and culture, community and society. Combines anecdotes, theory, and research data.

Non-Sexist Education for Young Children, Barbara Sprung, 1975.
Women's Action Alliance, Inc., New York. 115 pp.

A practical guide for teachers and parents on how to avoid sexist language and counteract social influences such as the stereotyped television programs and commercials. The guide includes five field-tested units of study: Families, Jobs People Do, The Human Body, Homemaking, and Sports. Annotated bibliographies of nonsexist picture books and nonsexist readings for adults are included.

Books for Today's Young Children, Jeanne Bracken and Sharon Wigutoff, 1979. The Feminist Press, New York. 35 pp.

An annotated bibliography of nonstereotyped picture books. includes a subject index covering such areas as working mothers, handicaps, contemporary grandparents, multiracial, single parents, sensitive males, adventurous females, adoption.

Audio

Sexism in the Classroom, Women's Educational Equity Act Program, 1980. Education Development Center, Inc., Newton, Massachusetts.

A series of eight bilingual (Spanish-English) modules designed to provide the skills necessary for identifying and analyzing the sexual stereotypes usually found in schools. Areas covered include popular ideas, beliefs, attitudes, biological and cultural roles, books, work, language, illustrations, history, athletics, television. Includes an audio-cassette tape.

Free To Be . . . You and Me, Marlo Thomas, Arista Records, New York.

This long-playing record includes songs which reflect non-sex-stereotyped views of what is possible and acceptable for girls and boys to do. Song themes deal with male-female relationships, competition, friendship, showing emotion, toys, family relations, child-adult relations. Contains a special twelve-page illustrated lyric booklet.

Visuals

We Are a Family, Education Development Center, Inc., 55 Chapel Street, Newton, Massachusetts, 02160.

This black-and-white wall poster displays a collection of thirty-two photographs reflecting multiracial, multi-generational varieties of families in a range of structures, numbers, geographical settings, life styles.

Men in the Nurturing Role, Women's Action Alliance, Inc.,
370 Lexington Ave., New York, New York, 10017.

A series of eight black-and-white photographs and a poster showing men interacting with young children in a variety of caregiving ways: changing diapers, teaching, bottle-feeding, hugging, painting, coaching. Men of different ages and races are included. The poster is a series of four photos showing a girl playing with her grandfather and his hat.

People At Work, Women's Action Alliance, Inc., 370 Lexington Ave., New York, New York, 10017.

A set of twenty-four multiethnic pictures of real women and men working at a wide variety of jobs, some non-traditional for the sex shown. Includes a complete teaching guide.

CHOOSING BOOKS FOR CHILDREN UNDER THREE:

WITH AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Research has shown that infants respond to the stimulation of bright colors and pictures beginning at birth. Parents' awareness of their children's very early ability to learn has combined with the growth of child-care centers for infants and toddlers to create an expanding book market for children under three years of age.

In preparing this annotated bibliography, Project Beginning Equal (BE) team members were surprised and disappointed to find that, despite this growth in the supply of infant-toddler books, it is difficult to find nonsexist, multicultural books to recommend to parents and caregivers. More than fifty books including board books, cloth books, plastic books, hardcover picture books, and paperback picture books were reviewed. Books were selected from the library at BJ's Kids, a child-care center with a nonsexist, multicultural philosophy; the resource collection of Project BE; and from three high-quality children's bookstores in New York City - Eeyore's; the Bank Street College Bookstore; and Womanbooks, a shop specializing in feminist literature. Books for Today's Children: an Annotated Bibliography of Non-Stereotyped Picture Books, compiled by Jeanne Bracken and Sharon Wigutoff (Old Westbury, NY: The Feminist Press, 1979), was consulted as an additional reference. Each book was reviewed by at least two people with expertise in choosing books for very young children. The following criteria were applied in reviewing the books:

Do girls take active roles?

Do boys show emotions?

Do children of both sexes participate in all types of activities?

Are children and adults of many races included and depicted in realistic ways?

Does the author use nonsexist language and avoid the generic "he" for animals and inanimate objects?

Are the illustrations nonsexist?

Are toys illustrated in the books in ways that suggest they will be used by children of both sexes?

Are the storyline, language, and illustrations age-appropriate?

Is the book durable?

Is the book affordable?

Not one of the books reviewed fulfilled all of the above criteria. Two books came the closest: Ten, Nine, Eight by Molly ang, and You Go Away by Dorothy Corey. Ten, Nine, Eight is age-appropriate and shows a Black father in a nurturant role. However, it is an expensive hardback picture book that very young children might have difficulty handling with care. You Go Away explores the topic of separation in an appealing, age-appropriate way. Both parents in the story are shown in nurturing roles and the child-care setting is multicultural. It, too, is a hardcover, picture book, rather than a board book which would be more durable for this age group.

Clearly, there is a paucity of books for children under three that are durable, affordable, age-appropriate, and also counter sexist and racist stereotypes. Quite a number of books are good in some respects but not in others. These books, which constitute a "step in the right direction," have been recommended with reservations. For example, many books are nonsexist but focus on white, middle-class families. Taken individually, these books may be good, but they need to be matched by other books that depict, in nonsexist ways, caring families from many cultures. Some books make an effort to be multicultural, but, because of cartoon-style drawings, everyone appears to have the same features regardless of skin tone.

In creating a library for young children, "neutral" books are an important component. These books are usually about animals who are not referred to by gender pronouns. Other neutral topics include books about trains, cars, and tools. These books give no overt message to young children about sex roles. However, when such books are used exclusively with boys, children learn that their sex determines what they can be interested in and, ultimately, how they can live their lives. When a conscious effort is made to use such books with girls, the parent or caregiver conveys to children that both girls and boys can learn about all sorts of things.

In reviewing the books, it was important to examine each title as a separate entity. For example, a company might publish some books that are nonsexist and multicultural, but also publish others that abound with stereotypes. Also, within a series by one author, some titles might fit the criteria outlined above, while others do not. It is important to read every page carefully, because sometimes one phrase or illustration may be stereotyped in an otherwise quality book. When this happens, and it frequently does, the reader will have to use her or his own judgment about how to use the book. With pre-reading children, it is a bit easier to edit or skip some text than with older children.

The following annotated list of books is meant to serve as a guideline for choosing books for children under the age of three. The list is quite selective, and many popular books have not been listed because they did not meet too many of the criteria. Since none of the books on the list met all the criteria developed by the reviewers, the books are divided into three categories: recommended, recommended with reservation, and recommended "neutral" books. The strengths and weaknesses of each book is described.

Recommended

Bang, Molly. Ten, Nine, Eight. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1983. A simple story of a nurturant Black father putting his daughter to bed. Beautiful four-color illustrations of the child's room, toys, etc. Hardcover and expensive, but a classic.

Corey, Dorothy. You Go Away. Chicago: Albert Whitman & Co., 1976. This very simple book explores parents' going away and returning, whether they are playing peek-a-boo, taking a trip, etc. Parents of both sexes are shown in nurturing roles. The day-care classroom is multiracial. The theme addresses separation, a major concern for toddlers, in an age-appropriate way. Hardcover.

Jonas, Ann. When You Were A Baby. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1982. The simple pictures are appropriate for two-year-olds who have recent memories of babyhood. The toys are good toys for all children and are in no way sex-defined. Hardcover.

Parish, Peggy. I Can - Can You? Levels One and Two. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1980. These books are stitched, printed on plasticized paper so that they are as durable as cloth books. They show children doing age-appropriate activities that toddlers will relate to. Unfortunately, instead of mixing the children, the Level One book features white children, and Level Two book features Black children.

Weissman, Jackie. All About Me/Let's Be Friends. (Book and record set distributed by Gryphon House, 3706 Otis St., Mt. Ranier, MD 20712.) The set contains two paperback books featuring photographs (black and white) of children in preschool settings. The photos are nonsexist, multiracial/ethnic, and include children with disabilities. Each book contains the sheet music for a song which also appears as text under the pictures. Also included is a 45rpm record of the song sung by "Miss Jackie."

Recommended with Reservations

Berenstain, Stan and Jan. He Bear, She Bear. New York: Random House, 1974. In a sing-song rhyme, the bears go over all the things both girls and boys can be, such as pilots, performers, scientists. The book is suggested because it addresses gender identity without, for the most part, reinforcing traditional sex roles. It does, however, fall into some sexist pitfalls; for example, on the page that shows the boy with his father, the boy is looking up respectfully while his father, who has been chopping wood, speaks. On the opposite page, the girl is shown clinging to her mother's skirt, while her mother, who has been carrying wood, speaks. Also, on the page devoted to what boys can aspire to do, they are shown in more adventurous activities than those described on the comparison page for girls.

Bracken, Carolyn. Here Come the Fire Engines. Racine, Wisconsin: Golden Press, 1981. The firefighters are all male, but are referred to as firefighters in this Golden Sturdy Shape Book. A Black policewoman is directing traffic as the fire engine comes to a light. While the book is multiracial, everyone is a caricature.

Burroughs, Virginia Lake. Herbie At the Park. Freeport, N.Y. 11520: Educational Activities, Inc., 1978. Herbie's cousin, Jeff, takes care of him at the park. Jeff is about eight years old and is shown in nurturing scenes. Paperback.

_____. Herbie at the Supermarket. Freeport, N.Y. 11520: Educational Activities, Inc., 1978. Herbie's parents take him to the supermarket. Herbie, a biracial toddler, is shown in photographs of typical food-shopping activities. The cashier at the checkout counter is male. Paperback.

Carle, Eric. Let's Paint a Rainbow. New York: Philomel Books, 1982. Together, a man and woman dressed in painters' workclothes paint a rainbow as they count by two's up to eight. Both characters are white. Sturdy, board book.

Dugan, Bill. The Truck Book. New York: Golden Press, 1980. Women and men are shown driving trucks, tractors, and other vehicles in this Golden Sturdy Shape book. Unfortunately, the cartoon-like drawings are stereotyped. The Black people all seem to have the same face and are fat.

Eichler, Margrit. Martin's Father. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Lollipop Power, 1971. A single father and his son spend time together, playing, eating, walking, bathing, and doing other typical activities in the day of a young child. Paperback.

Golden Books. My Yard. Racine, Wisconsin: Golden Press, 1978. This board book depicts a suburban or small town backyard through photographs of multiracial children. Girls are shown in active play. Urban children are unlikely to relate to the theme.

Hoban, Tana. Push-Pull-Empty-Full. New York: Macmillan, 1972. Brief text and photographs illustrate fifteen pairs of opposites. Girls are shown in active roles throughout, but the multiracial balance is poor. Hardcover.

Jewell, Nancy. Snuggle Bunny. New York: Harper and Row, 1972. A young male bunny searches for someone he can snuggle with. Toward the end of the book he finds a frail, elderly man who also needs someone to love. While the book supports the male need to both nurture and to be nurtured, the image of the elderly as frail and lonely is a stereotype. Also, both the bunny and the man are white. Hardcover.

Krauss, Ruth. I Can Fly. New York: Golden Press, 1981. Both the boy and the girl are active. The story is age-appropriate, and the book is inexpensive and accessible. The country setting seems romanticized and unrealistic, and the children are all white. Hardcover.

Ormerod, Jan. Sunshine. New York: Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard Books, 1981. This wordless book shows a girl, the main character, waking up and spending time with both her parents. The setting is, however, white and very middle-class. Hardcover.

Rockwell, Anne and Harlow. Can I Help? New York: Macmillan, 1982. A girl helps both parents paint, wash the car, and do other chores. She lets them help her, too. A nonsexist theme, but the characters are all white. Hardcover.

Rockwell, Harlow. My Nursery School. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1976. A girl plays with many different toys in this simple depiction of a nonsexist classroom. Hardcover.

Scott, Ann Herbert. On Mother's Lap. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972. There is room for all of Michael's toys, Michael, and also his baby sibling on mother's lap. This story of an Inuit family affirms the feelings children have about new babies. Hardcover.

Stinson, Kathy. Big or Little. Toronto: Annick Press, 1982. A little boy is proud of what he can do and is realistic about what he still cannot do. There is a nurturant father and the examples of what the child can and cannot do are age-appropriate and very realistic. The characters are all white. Hardcover.

. Red is Best. Toronto: Annick Press, 1982. A little girl wants everything she wears to be red. This book expresses feelings most toddlers have experienced. Her persistence in wearing red shows strength and independence. She is active, and knows what she wants. The child is white. Hardcover.

Wolde, Gunilla. This is Betsy. New York: Random House, 1975. Betsy is an active and spunky girl with typical likes and dislikes. She also appears in Betsy's Baby Brother (1975), Betsy's First Day at Nursery School (1976), and Betsy and the Doctor (1978). Paperback.

Wolde, Gunilla. Tommy and Sara Dress Up. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972. Tommy is shown choosing dress-up clothes with Sara. The children are both white. Paperback.

Recommended "Neutral" Books

Becker, Jim and Mayer, Andy. My First Medical Bag. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982. This board book has a handle and can be carried around by a toddler. It features animals as doctor and patient, and they are not gender defined.

Chubby Board Book. Things I Like to Play With. Tokyo, New York: Zokeisha, Simon & Schuster, 1981. A sturdy board book featuring familiar toddler toys.

Hooker, Yvonne. Wheels Go Round. New York: Grossett and Dunlap, Inc., 1978. Spiral bound board book of all kinds of transportation. No gender implied. Holes are cut into the board for wheels.

Johnson, Audean. Soft As A Kitten. New York: Random House, 1982. This board book has textures for the child to feel and a mirror to look into, but has no children in stereotyped roles.

Johnson and Johnson. Baby Bear Plays at Home. Skillman, New Jersey: Johnson and Johnson, 1983. This is one of three in a series of vinyl books for very young children. It has a handle for carrying, and it comes with a vinyl bear children can fit into the slots in the book.

Lilly, Kenneth. Animals on the Farm. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982. Each page of this board book has a drawing of an adult and baby animals. A companion book features animals at the zoo.

Oxenbury, Helen. Dressing. New York: Wanderer, 1981. An androgynous white baby puts on six familiar items of clothing. A sturdy board book.

Platt and Munk. Baby's Things. New York: Platt and Munk Publishers, 1966. Each page of this sturdy board book features a familiar item toddlers will recognize. Photographed in full color.

Prepared by B.J. Richards and Rachel Theilheimer for Beginning
Equal: The Project on Nonsexist Childrearing for Infants and
Toddlers

MAKING NONSEXIST, MULTICULTURAL BOOKS AND TOYS
FOR VERY YOUNG CHILDREN

Handmade books and toys are appreciated by and relevant to all programs for young children - most particularly in centers which specialize in the care of infants and toddlers. A handmade book or toy demonstrates concretely to young children that adults really care about them and understand their needs. In turn, this helps children learn to value and take care of their playthings.

Most commercially available books and illustrated toys (such as lotto games) reflect sexist and racist stereotypes. They usually feature white, two-parent families in which the mother is a full-time homemaker and the father is the breadwinner (actually, this type of family represents only seven percent of the population). Where workers are depicted, they are shown in stereotyped, male and female jobs: clerks, cashiers, and teachers for the women; police officers, letter carriers, and truck drivers for the men. Also books and toys virtually never show a child or adult who is disabled; this, despite the fact that one in every five adults and one in every ten children in the United States is disabled.

Given this dearth of relevant materials, handmade books and toys can enhance the early childhood environment in several important ways:

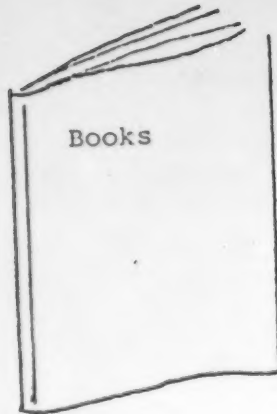
They can be nonsexist, showing girls and boys and women and men in a variety of nonstereotyped work and play roles.

They can be "inclusive," reflecting a multicultural society and including images of children and adults with disabilities.

They can reflect the children's own interests, emotional needs, and experiences, featuring children, their families, and classmates in the illustrations.

They can be geared to the children's level of development; for example, a one-to-one matching game, or a lotto that has two pictures on a card instead of four or six.

Handmade books and toys can be constructed in several different ways. The important thing to remember is that they must be made from safe, nontoxic, durable materials and be easy for the children to handle. Heavy cardboard or art board covered with clear contact paper makes materials which are sturdy enough to last in an infant-toddler environment. Instructions for making several items follow.



You will need:

1. Heavy cardboard or art board
2. Photographs, magazine pictures or drawings
3. Markers, pens, crayons or pencils
4. Lined paper
5. Colored paper
6. Rubber cement or glue
7. 3 metal rings
8. Clear contact paper
9. Hammer and one nail
10. Scissors

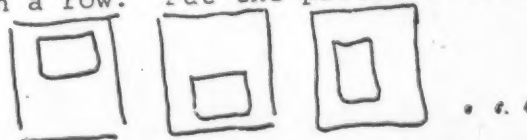
Step 1

Cut the art board to a size that children will be able to handle. 6" by 8" works well. Books can be made in a special shape:
Cut enough boards to make all the pages.



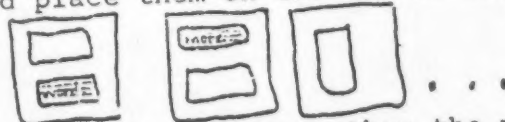
Step 2

Place the boards in a row. Put the pictures in order on the boards.



Step 3

If words will accompany the pictures, write them on lined paper; it makes everyone's handwriting clearer and more precise. Trim around the words and place them on the boards too.



Step 4

Cut colored paper just a little larger than the pictures and words and glue them onto it. The colored paper frames the pictures and words.



Step 5

Glue everything to the correct board.



Step 6

Cover both sides of each board with clear contact paper. Trim the edges of the contact paper.



Step 7

Stack the boards in order. Hammer the nail through the boards in three places to make holes for the three rings. Insert the rings through the holes.





You will need:

1. Pictures or photographs of children of many races
2. Art board or heavy cardboard
3. Non-toxic white glue
4. Clear contact paper
5. Scissors
6. All plastic hanger or smooth wood rod
7. Knife
8. Cotton string
9. Heavy needle

Step 1

Cut the art board to a size just larger than the pictures. Cut as many boards as there are pictures.

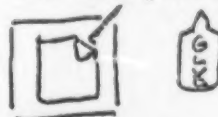
Step 2

Glue the pictures to the art board. Whenever you are making something children might mouth, be sure to use non-toxic glue.



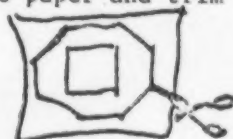
Step 3

Cover both sides of the board with clear contact paper and trim the edges.



Step 4

Using the knife, make notches in the rod or hanger. Make as many notches as there will be pictures.



Step 5

Poke the threaded needle through the art board, having knotted one end of the thread.



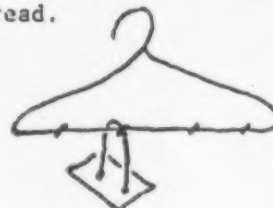
Step 6

Push the thread into a notch on the hanger and poke the needle into the same art board again. Pull the needle out, and knot that end of the thread.



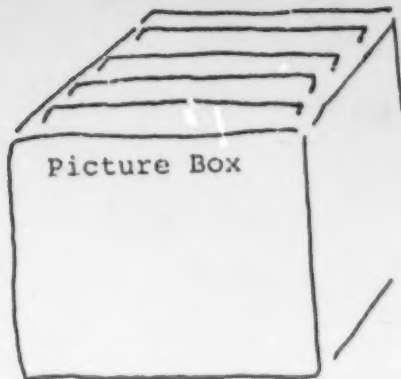
Step 7

Continue to hang all of the pictures.



WARNING: Do not use hooks or a wire hanger or anything which, if dropped into the crib might hurt the baby.

Note: Thanks to Nancy Balaban of Bank Street College ¹⁷⁸ for her help and ideas.

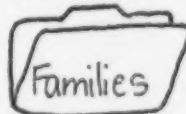


You will need:

1. Photographs or magazine pictures
2. Art board or heavy cardboard
3. Rubber cement or glue
4. Clear contact paper
5. Scissors
6. Box

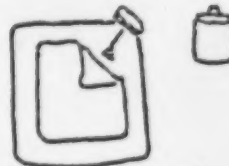
Step 1

Collect photographs or magazine pictures of workers (women and men of many races working as letter carriers, police officers, repair people, office workers, caregivers....), things with wheels (driven by women and men of many races), children using toys, families, etc. (all of people of many races and showing girls and boys and men and women in equally active poses).



Step 2

Glue the pictures on the art board.



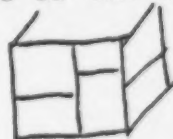
Step 3

Cover both sides of each board with clear contact paper and trim the edges.



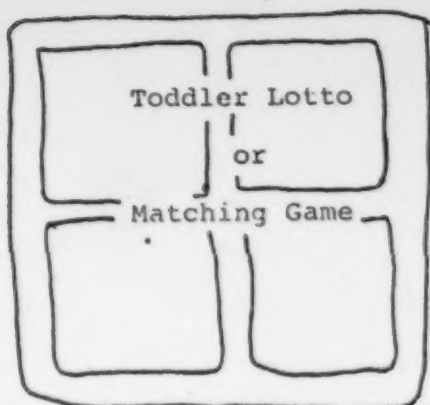
Step 4

Glue similar pictures on the outside of the box and cover it with clear contact paper.



Step 5

Place the boards in the box and keep it available for children to reach into, pull out boards, talk about them, and carry them around.

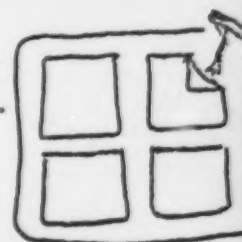


You will need:

1. Heavy cardboard or art board
2. 2 copies of each of 8 pictures or photographs of children of many races, showing girls and boys in equally active roles
3. Rubber cement or glue
4. Clear contact paper
5. Scissors
6. Stocking box
7. Marker

Step 1

Glue four different pictures on one piece of art board. Glue the other four pictures on another board.

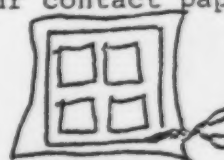


Step 2

Cover both sides of each board with clear contact paper. Trim the edges.

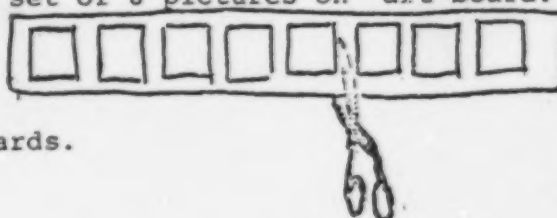
Step 3

Glue the second set of 8 pictures on art board.



Step 4

Cut them into cards.



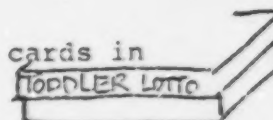
Step 5

Cover both sides of each card with clear contact paper. Trim the edges.



Step 6

Label the stocking box and place the boards and cards in it for storage.



To play: Give two children a board each. Show them one card. Ask who has it on a board. Talk about what the children in the picture are doing. The child who has the picture on her/his board matches it by placing the card on top of the board.

STATEMENT ON HOMOSEXUALITY

Each child is unique and is capable of a wide range of personality traits and behaviors. Societally-imposed sex roles narrow this potential rich diversity to rigid codes of masculinity or femininity.

Researchers do not know why some people are heterosexual and some people are homosexual. What contemporary research does tell us is that people who are homosexual are as diverse and come from as broad a variety of family backgrounds and life experiences as do people who are heterosexual.

Some parents feel strongly that they do not want their children to be homosexual. Some parents do not share that concern. All parents seem to want their children to be able to take care of themselves and to form good human relationships with other people.

Nonsexist childrearing helps girls and boys develop to their full human potential, to be comfortable with themselves and to incorporate a rich variety of healthy traits and behaviors into their personalities. Nonsexist childrearing helps children become strong caring people who can develop good human relationships with all people.

Research in Review

Sex Role Socialization in Early Childhood

by Alice Sterling Honig

"The boys won't let us play with the blocks. They are always building with them," complained a five-year-old girl to her nursery school teacher. During group discussion time later, the teacher asked the children for ideas that would settle this problem. "But girls don't like blocks as much as us. They don't need them like we do," explained the boys. When the teacher urged that they help find a solution to the problem because the girls genuinely felt that the situation was unfair, the boys took some time and came up with an idea: "Well, the girls can play with the blocks when we're outdoors on the playground." Should the teacher tell the children they are being sexist? How could this problem best be resolved?

Madeleine ran in and indignantly reported to her mother that her brothers were teasing her because she could not urinate standing up. "I can so!" declared the four-year-old tearfully, and proceeded to demonstrate by straddling the toilet. How should a parent handle this put-down of a girl's bathroom prowess and the young girl's feelings of not being able to do something the way boys can?

In the youngest group in the community chess club, a seven-year-old girl appeared one day. "Papa," confided six-year-old Jonah, shocked and puzzled, "I didn't know that girls could play chess!" How should the father reply, given the child's stereotyped belief and the reality that females of any age rarely appeared at the club?

In a child care room, the boys marched around with paper bags over their heads. Eye slits allowed them to see. On the front of each bag were taped bottle caps and buttons. The boys were pretending to be robots in an extraterrestrial game. In another corner of the room, the girls were peacefully applying and comparing different colors of nail polish to their fingertips with much interest and satisfaction. Should the teacher urge the girls to participate in more active, creative, typically masculine activities, or should she let them choose activities of their own, despite her feelings of disapproval at their choice?

Twelve-month-old Michael sat on the floor cuddling his older sister's doll. Upon seeing Michael's choice of activity, his father yanked the doll away from him, yelling, "Boys don't play with girls' things."

The pervasive differences in activity choice and certain play behaviors among young children add a particular urgency to the need for more information about the development of sexual identity and gender role identity. According to Eisenberg (1982), the term *sexual identity*

refers to the individual's sexual (reproductive) patterns of behavior . . . (whereas)

This is one of a regular series of Research in Review columns. The column in this issue was written and edited by Alice Sterling Honig, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Child and Family Studies, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York.

gender identity is the self-awareness and acceptance of being either a male or female. . . . *Gender role* refers to the acceptance and adoption of socially defined behaviors and attitudes associated with being either male or female. (pp. 225-226)

Many adults confuse gender identity and gender role. A little boy may know that he is a boy, and feel comfortable about it, but still enjoy some activities such as playing house or pretending to nurse a doll tenderly, activities which have been considered typically feminine. These activities do not necessarily mean that he does not like being a boy, nor that he is insecure about maleness. In fact, sometimes persons who show extremely sex-stereotypic behavior and seem very uncomfortable about activities considered typical of the other sex may actually be more insecure in their gender identity than others who are less rigid in their beliefs and values about sex-appropriate behaviors.

Sex differences: How widespread in early childhood?

Answers to questions about early differences depend on the research literature that is being surveyed. Those who look at neuroendocrinological and morphological factors may agree with Hutt (1972) that "girls and boys differ from each other in a multitude of ways—physically, psychologically, and behaviorally" (p. 73). Others, such as Maccoby and Jacklin (1974), after reviewing more than 1,400 studies, conclude that many differences are myths—for example, that girls are more sociable than boys. However, they do find that sex differences have been demonstrated in four areas of behaviors:

- girls have greater verbal ability;
- boys excel in visual-spatial ability;
- boys excel in mathematics ability;
- boys are more aggressive.

Birns (1976) concludes that "given a room full of infants, under two years of

age, all dressed in yellow, it would be difficult if not impossible to identify males and females on the basis of activity level" (p. 238). But she reports that after two years of age, data do show that girls are more dependent, boys display more aggression than girls, and boys elicit more aggression than girls. Birns acknowledges that the full impact of parent socialization practices from birth (such as provision of different toys and buying pink for girls and blue for boys) has not been explored.

Are sexual differences biologically based? Some are (Fagot and Kronsberg 1982). The fact that males are more aggressive, for example, probably has a basis in hormonal differences. Peterson and Wittig (1979) observe that widely held beliefs about sex roles often become the stereotypes of what is considered appropriate sex-related behavior, regardless of any biological basis. They argue that observed statistical differences between males and females may indeed be related to biological differences, but do not imply that sex-related differences are necessarily innate. Correlation does not imply causality.

Questions about what is innate and what is culturally determined have dominated discussions of sex role differences in the past decades. There are three major theoretical positions on this central issue: biological, social learning, and cognitive-developmental.

Freud's libido theory is that the basic patterning of sexual attitudes is instinctual . . . but the expressions of these patterns are eventually channeled, distorted, or influenced by cultural forces. In contrast, social learning theories of sex-role development . . . see the patterning of sexual attitudes as a reflection of the patterning or sex-typing of the culture . . . and the child's "sex-typed behaviors can be described by the same learning principles used to analyze any other aspect of an individual's behavior." (Mischel 1966, p. 56)

The social-learning view holds that normal heterosexual patterning of sexuality is the result of a learned conformity to cultural role patterns through punishment, re-

ward, and observational learning. (Kohlberg 1966, p. 85)

Kohlberg describes his own cognitive-developmental viewpoint as primarily interactional, in the sense that a child's social and sexual attitudes are viewed neither as direct reflections of cultural patterns nor of innate structures. In a Piagetian paradigm, this means that children *construct* sex role concepts on the basis of individual experience with their own bodies and with their social environments.

Thus, biology, socializing forces, and the developing cognitive capacities of a child all play a vital and complex role in the development of gender identity. This review will focus primarily on ways in which the social experiences of boys and girls differ from birth, and on some of the corresponding child behaviors associated with different adult childrearing and teaching styles. Concerned early childhood educators can then use these findings to make their own decisions about whether families and learning environments need to modify some of their current styles or interactions to increase chances for more egalitarian rearing of boys and girls. Some kinds of sex role socialization patterns are more likely than others to optimize children's chances for actualization in a broader arena of endeavors, rather than only in those areas where data suggest that one sex or the other is currently favored.

Development of sex role identity and gender identity

In the 1940s when Gesell asked children "Are you a little girl or a little boy?" most two-year-olds did not know with certainty; about three-fourths of the three-year-olds did. As soon as toddlers have the words for *boy* and *girl* in their vocabulary, they refer to themselves as such quite accurately. Toddlers between one-and-one-half and two years of age can also label other

children correctly by sex. Thus, *gender identity* is achieved before three years of age.

The second step, after self-identification as male or female, according to Kohlberg, is to understand that one's sex is stable over the life cycle: little girls will become women, not men and little boys will never grow up to become women and have babies. *Gender stability* develops between five and seven years of age, when other constancies, such as conservation of length, number, and mass are beginning to develop. Gender constancy has another aspect that children at the end of the preschool period will learn: despite different hairstyles or clothing, one's sex does not change. Emmerich and his colleagues (1977) asked questions such as "If Janie really wants to be a boy, can she? If Janie played with trucks and did boys' things, what would she be?"

Those children who fell below a certain stage in intellectual development could not seem to grasp the fact that, since Janie is a girl, she will remain a girl, (1) whether she likes it or not, (2) no matter what kinds of activities she engages in, and (3) no matter what she wears or how she chooses to look. . . . When gender constancy is achieved . . . children eventually understand and can demonstrate their understanding, that sex is a stable characteristic of all individuals. (Brooks-Gunn and Matthews 1979, p. 119)

The next step in sex role acquisition, according to Kohlberg, is that children come to *value* same-sex people, objects, and activities. When Thompson (1975) told preschool children that some pictures were boy things and others were girl things, the result was that children, when later asked for their preferences, chose overwhelmingly the objects that had been labeled as belonging to their sex.

These trends were seen as early as three years of age. By kindergarten age, the preferences are often pronounced. When asked to choose one in a pair of game drawings, in which children were of the same or different sex, and asked to choose



Sharon Stine

Adults need to do more to help both sexes toward achievement and toward tenderness.

one of a pair of pictures of toys typically played with by boys or girls, the children typically chose playmates of their own sex, and toys typical of their own sex (Laosa and Brophy 1972). They also preferentially chose peers of their own sex in play, according to their teachers' sociometric observations of playmates. Thus, the last steps in sex role development seem to be not only valuing same sex activities and objects but also showing preference for them.

Some experts feel that learning gender identity early contributes to sex bias problems. Gould (1972) wrote a fairy tale about Baby X, who is brought up not as a boy, not as a girl, but as an X. Neighbors and storekeepers get very upset. In the fairy tale, Baby X grows up loved at home and excels at boys' sports as well as girls' games so much that the child is liked at

school by peers despite community outcry and indignation. One wonders indeed whether such a felicitous outcome would occur in the real world.

Does early gender identity acquisition necessarily mean that harmful sex stereotypes must inevitably be brought to bear on the child? A stereotype is a culturally determined and relatively fixed view of others in a group (such as females), so that one perceives them and reacts to them as if they all have the same characteristics and traits just *because* they are members of that group.

It is important to examine some of the research on how sex-role stereotypes affect adult responses to babies. Keep in mind that even though inappropriate stereotypes are prevalent in today's society, by denying young children the right to knowledge of their gender role identity, adults may only confuse them, and not necessarily improve the quality of non-sexist rearing conditions for them.

Sex labels for infants: What difference do they make to adults?

Different sex labels change the way babies are treated. In one study (Will, Self, and Datan 1976), a baby was sometimes dressed in pink and called *Beth*. Adults were then asked to play with her. Sometimes the baby was dressed in blue and called *Adam*. The adults who played with the baby said that of course they knew the child was a girl or a boy from the way the baby behaved. They remarked about how sweet and feminine *she* had been; how sturdy and vigorous *he* had been. Adults seem to make assumptions about infants depending on ascribed gender identity. If caregivers act on such assumptions, it may be essentially impossible to disentangle the effects of nurture and nature in shaping gender role identity.

In another study, Condry and Condry (1976) had adults rate a nine-month-old child's responses to a rattle, a doll, a jack-

in-the-box, and a teddy bear. The researchers varied the sex attribution of the baby for adult viewers when presenting a videotaped episode of the baby at play with the toys. Men who watched the videotapes attributed much larger differences to the behaviors of the baby, depending upon whether it had been called a girl or a boy. Curiously, those men who reported to have worked in child care perceived even greater differences between the baby as boy and the baby as girl than did men with little experience. No such effect of experience was found for women. Both men and women attributed fewer fears and more pleasure to the baby when it was labeled *boy* rather than *girl*. With the jack-in-the-box, for example, the girl's response was called fear. When the baby was labeled *boy* this response was called anger. The authors concluded that people do indeed see differences due to the label of *boy* or *girl*. "These differences tend to be most obvious in ambiguous situations and to follow the lines of socially accepted sex role stereotypes" (p. 819).

In another study of this kind, a three-month-old baby girl was played with by many adults. Some were told that she was female, some were told that she was a boy, and some were given no gender information. A doll, a toy football, and a teething ring were provided for the adults to give to the baby if they wished. Only when they thought the baby was a girl was there a significant effect. Then the adults offered the doll most often. Those who were not told the baby's sex most often guessed that the baby was a male. The adults justified their guesses by references to stereotyped behaviors: "She smiles a lot," "He's so strong" (Seavey, Katz, and Zalk 1975).

In an informal experiment reported by Pogrebin (1978), Robin Morgan informed some acquaintances that her new baby was a boy, and informed others that it was a girl. Upon hearing that they were looking at a new baby girl, people would coo about how sweet she was. On hearing

that the new baby was a boy, people tended to exclaim "Isn't he a big strapping boy." Thus, from infancy onward, boys and girls receive different messages of expectations from adults. Boys hear that they are to be strong. Girls hear that they are to be sweet and nice. This sounds very much like the recipes from the old nursery rhyme "What Are Little Girls Made of?"

Men and women who were parents were given a chance to play with a 14-month-old baby in a laboratory playroom (Frisch 1977). The mother sat nearby unobtrusively. When the baby was designated as a girl, it received more interpersonal stimulation and nurturant play. When introduced as a boy, the same baby received more encouragement for activity and for play with a toy typically given to boys. No sex differences were observed in the baby's play. The parents' own feelings as to what was appropriate play behavior for each sex determined the differential treatments received by the baby under each sex label.

Not only do descriptions of a baby and words addressed to a baby vary, but also toy offerings vary depending on whether adults ascribe one sex or the other to an infant. Smith and Loyd (1978) videotaped mothers of 32 firstborns playing with a six-month-old infant who had been either described to them as a boy or a girl. The mothers initially chose a toy to offer the baby in stereotypic conformity to the ascribed sex of the infant. Perceived boys were verbally encouraged to engage in gross motor activity more often than perceived girls. The mothers responded to gross motor activity of the perceived boy with their own gross motor activity significantly more often than to the baby perceived as a girl.

In general, the results of these studies show that only when a baby is designated and perceived as male do adults foster early socialization in the direction of a masculine stereotype of greater activity and physical prowess.

Sex role socialization practices of families

Fathers and mothers have been found to rate and to treat their own children differently, depending on the sex of the child. Thirty first-time parents rated their full-term, one-day-old babies, who did not differ in weight, length, or Apgar scores (Rubin, Provenzano, and Luria 1974). Daughters were rated as soft, fine-featured, little, awkward, and weak. Sons were more often described as firm, large-featured, big, well-coordinated, and strong. Fathers, particularly, used very stereotypic ratings.

Parents tend to buy their sons more transportation toys, sports equipment, and military toys. For their daughters, they buy dolls, stuffed animals, and household toys (Rheingold and Cook 1975).

Differential father behaviors have been reported early in the first year. Fathers hold boy babies longer than girls (Lamb 1978).

Vocalizations for babies. Moss (1967; 1974) found that during the first three weeks of life mothers held, stimulated, and attended to boy infants more. But careful analysis revealed that the three-week-old and three-month-old boys slept less well and were more fussy and irritable than girls. Thus, temperament rather than sex of baby seems more likely to have triggered the mothers' responses. After three months, girls were found to be cuddled significantly more. Moss also reported that mothers imitated the vocalizations of girl infants more frequently. Greater maternal vocalization to girls, but only to firstborns, has also been reported in a study of parents and newborns (Thoman, Leiderman, and Olson 1972). Whether girls get more vocalizations because they are held more (after the early weeks) than males, or whether mothers of irritable boys give fewer vocalizations and more of other kinds of behaviors is unclear. But if girl babies are kept closer to mothers during

more of the first year of life, then the probability is increased that talking will take place in the vicinity of female infants, whether the behavior is addressed to others or to the infant.

Language skills of girls may well be given a boost in this manner. Cherry and Lewis (1976) observed the spontaneous play of 12 middle socioeconomic status (SES) mothers with their two-year-old children and recorded more verbal behavior to females than to males. Girls were asked more questions, talked to more, given longer utterances, and given repetitions more often. Boys received verbal directives more than girls. The authors concluded that a component of mothers' sex role expectations regarding the language behavior of their children may be the expectation that girls should be more verbally responsive and talkative. Girls may be learning that this kind of behavior is appropriate for them. Note that the differences were in the parents, and not in the toddlers.

Staying close. Sex differences have been observed in the parting behaviors of mothers and children when the children are left at nursery school. In general, girls spoke to their mothers more, and the mothers adjusted clothes or hair more for the girls and patted them more, so that the girls spent 92 seconds and the boys only 36 seconds with the mother before parting (Brindley et al., cited in Hutt 1972). Of course, it is hard to tell whether mothers tend to keep female children closer, as do other primates, or whether males hardly give the mother a chance, since they were apt, in this study, to be off with playmates as soon as their mothers helped them with their coats.

This proximity/closeness of mothers with female children as compared with males has also been found by Goldberg and Lewis (1969). Thirteen-month-old infants played freely in a large playroom containing nine simple toys. The mothers were instructed to sit in a corner of the

room and to take the infant off their laps. Girls, characteristically, were reluctant to leave their mothers. When put down, many returned to mother within five seconds. In general, during play girls returned to their mothers in a mean of 4½ minutes, in comparison with boys, who returned in a mean of 8½ minutes. During the 15 minute play period, girls made more frequent returns to their mothers. They touched, vocalized to, and looked at their mothers more than did the boys.

When a wire mesh barrier was placed across the room, separating baby from mother, the girls cried much more than the boys. Typically, they stood at the center of the barrier, waiting, while the boys made active attempts, even when upset, to get around the ends of the barrier to return to their mothers.

In terms of toy preference, girls tended to choose toys involving fine motor coordination. Boys tended to be more active in play, more exploratory, and more vigorous. The authors hypothesize that in the first year of life, parents reinforce those behaviors they consider to be sex-appropriate.

Compliance. Several measures from an interaction situation between 10-month-old infants and their mothers were used in a multiple regression framework to predict child compliance at 22 months and at 42 months, child willingness to explore at 22 months, and child interest in the experimenter at 42 months (Martin 1979).

Responsive mothers of sons had boys who later were more willing to explore and more interested in interaction with the experimenter than were sons of less responsive mothers.

But responsive mothers of girls had daughters who were less willing to explore and less interested in the experimenter. According to Martin (1979)

Mother responsiveness may be thought of as the extent to which a mother allows her ten-month-old a sense of control specifically, of control over her and over the in-

teraction. . . . In short, the child can make the world do what he or she wants it to. . . . Having a sense of control is an important component of becoming compliant to one's mother for boys, but girls are unaffected in their compliance. (pp. 8-9)

Martin concludes that

Girls may more easily than boys establish intense, dyadic relations with their mothers regardless of maternal treatment; however, unless a girl is somehow forced (by a challenging, non-responsive mother) to go beyond that relationship into the external world of people and of objects, she may lack the confidence and boldness to do so on her own. (pp. 10-11)

Agentic versus interpersonal competence: parental preferences

In four separate studies, Block (1973) using the Child-Rearing Practices Report, found that socialization practices for boys differed from those reported by parents for girls. For boys, parents emphasized achievement and competition, insistence of control of feelings and expressions of affect, and a concern for rule conformity. Block found that, for girls, emphasis was placed on

developing and maintaining close interpersonal relationships: they are encouraged to talk about their troubles and to reflect upon life, are shown affection physically, and are given comfort and reassurance. (p. 517)

Fathers were particularly critical in directing and channeling the sex typing of the child in the family. In a task study where parents were required to encourage the preschool child to construct squares the same dimensions as a specific standard, parents pressed their boys more for achievement. From their girls, less was expected and was quite acceptable. This seems to emphasize the conclusion that agentic competence is encouraged in boys; interpersonal, expressive skills seem to be fostered in girls. Block summarizes findings from cross-cultural studies of child-rearing and from longitudinal studies:

The socialization process—the internalization of values—appears to have differential effects on the personality development of males and females. For males, socialization tends to enhance experiential options and to encourage more androgynous sex role definitions, since some traditionally feminine concerns (conscientiousness, conservation, interdependency) are emphasized along with the pressure to renounce negative aspects of the masculine role: opportunism, restlessness, and self-centeredness. For women, the socialization process tends to reinforce the nurturant, docile, submissive, and conservative aspects of the traditionally defined female role and discourages personal qualities conventionally defined as masculine: self-assertiveness, achievement orientation, and independence. (p. 525)

Block concludes with a wish that society should do more toward integrating agentic effectiveness and communicative closeness in rearing the young—so that both boys' and girls' options will be broadened and enriched.

Intelligence

How do these differential parental socialization practices affect the intellectual performance of boys and girls? Maccoby (1966) observes that

The same environmental input affects the two sexes differently, and different factors are associated with optimal performance for boys and girls. The brighter girls tend to be the ones who have not been tied closely to their mother's apron strings, but have been allowed and encouraged to fend for themselves. Brighter boys, on the other hand, have had high maternal warmth and protection in early childhood. . . . There is a complex interaction. The two sexes would appear to have somewhat different intellectual strengths and weaknesses, and hence different influences serve to counteract the weaknesses and augment the strengths. (p. 51)

Is sex role socialization harder for boys or for girls?

Who gets the more difficult task in being

socialized into gender roles—boys or girls? Research does not provide a clear-cut answer. As far as punishment goes, fathers give more physical punishment to sons (Tasch 1952). Also, Fagot (1978a) reports that boys are criticized more often for wanting to play with traditional girls' toys than girls are for wanting to play with typical male toys. Even as toddlers, males were criticized for playing with dolls.

In observing parents and toddlers at home, Fagot was able to identify sex-preferred and sex-stereotyped behaviors. Female sex-preferred behaviors included playing with dolls, dancing, asking for help, and playing dress-up. Male sex-preferred behaviors included playing with blocks, manipulating objects, and climbing. Sex-stereotyped behaviors were those related by the parents as being appropriate only for one sex. For girls, these were: playing with dolls, dressing up like mother, and dancing. Boys' stereotyped behaviors were rough and tumble play and aggressive behavior. Parents were found more likely to respond to girls' requests for help and to give negative responses when girls manipulated objects. Boys were given the *opposite* parental responses. The net effect is that boys were encouraged to explore and learn about the world around them. The girls were rewarded essentially for remaining dependent and helpless. Fagot (1978a) concludes that sex role socialization pressures on boys and girls are subtle and complex.

If boys and girls are given differential feedback on the importance of exploration and dependence as toddlers in the form of reaction to the simple behaviors of manipulating objects and asking for help, then it is not too surprising that by middle childhood we start to get consistent sex differences in the two categories. (p. 465)

These findings have been replicated in several studies. Parents allow boys to wander more freely in the neighborhood than girls (Saegert and Hart 1976). When parents are asked at what age children can

be allowed to use scissors without adult supervision, cross the street, tie their own shoes, play away from home without first telling the parents, or take a bus ride, their answers indicate that parents of boys are willing for them to undertake these tasks and responsibilities earlier than parents of girls (Hoffman 1972). Again, parents seem to encourage boys' independence earlier than that of girls.

Messages about sex roles come not only from the content of adults' speech, but from their communication styles and the nonverbal behaviors, such as smiling or cold tones, that accompany adult talk. Typically, in a conversation, speakers take turns. Grief (1979) recorded three activities of parent-child pairs during two laboratory visits, one with the father and preschooler and one with the mother and preschooler. The mean age of the children was three-and-one-half years. The three videotaped activities each adult-child pair was asked to engage in were reading a book which had no words, playing with a toy car that had removable parts, and using food items and a cash register to play pretend store. There were no significant differences in the number of utterances of fathers versus mothers or in the number of utterances made to boys versus girls. Parents interrupted their child's speech about 7.8 times per play session. Both parents were more likely to interrupt a girl than a boy. There was a tendency for fathers to interrupt more than mothers. Both parents also engaged in more simultaneous speech with daughters. Grief concludes that

If the use of interruptions and simultaneous speech is considered to be a sign of impoliteness to the other speaker, and a way of controlling conversation, then these results suggest that fathers are less sensitive to their children and more controlling than mothers, and that mothers and fathers are less sensitive to daughters than to sons. . . . Fathers may demonstrate their high status. . . . The message to girls is that they are more interruptible, which suggests, in a subtle way, that they are also not too important, or at least less

so than boys. (pp. 6-7)

Fathers, in general, have been found to create more pressures for conformity to sex role stereotypes in the behaviors and play of their young children. Langlois and Down (1980) videotaped three- and five-year-old children in interactions with sex-appropriate toys and cross-sex toys when either their mother, a peer, or their father was in the laboratory room with them. In general, mothers were positive toward children, whether boys or girls. Fathers rewarded their three-year-old daughters most frequently, and their five-year-old sons less frequently. Fathers punished sons more than daughters, and fathers punished children more in general for playing with cross-sex toys. Langlois concluded that "socialization pressure for sex-typed behavior may come most consistently from fathers" and that "fathers may perpetuate sex-role differentiations much more so than mothers" (p. 1245). Thus, despite pleas for transition away from traditional sex-typed values about what are appropriate play objects and behaviors for young children, it seems that fathers may not participate readily in social changes toward more egalitarian sex role socialization.

Teachers and caregivers as sex role socializers

As might be expected, the research on teachers and differential treatment of young children as a function of their sex follows some of the same patterns that have been found in families. Sex-typed behaviors are reinforced by teachers (Etaugh, Collins, and Gerson 1975). Boys get more attention. "This pattern of high praise and high punishment shows up at home and in school as well. It looks as if boys receive more attention for *everything* they do" (Brooks-Gunn and Matthews 1979, pp. 146-147).

Studies of sixth grade teachers find that

teachers scold boys more than girls. They also praise boys more (Meyer and Thompson 1956). Similarly, for preschoolers, Berk (1971) found that teachers gave boys both more positive and more negative attention.

In a study in which the authors were testing teachers' attitudes and behaviors in a search for race or sex bias, little of either was found in elementary grade classrooms. However, the recipients of unusually large amounts of teacher attention turned out to be Black boys who received "negative reinforcement" for inappropriate behavior and White girls, who were "rejected" for dependent behaviors (Carew and Lightfoot 1979).

Using a behavior checklist in nursery schools, Fagot and Patterson (1969) found that teachers tended strongly to reinforce traditional feminine behaviors both for boys and girls, though peers reinforced same-sex behaviors. The authors were disturbed by this finding and suggested that "this might relate to the higher incidence of reading, speech, academic, and social problems evidenced by younger boys as compared to younger girls" (p. 568). A strong plea is made for more male teachers of young children in order to counteract such preferences for typically feminine behaviors in classrooms.

Serbin et al. (1973) observed 15 nursery school classes with about 200 children. Teachers responded vigorously with loud reprimands to boys' disruptive behavior more than to girls'. The authors concluded that this response reinforced male disruptive behaviors. Although teachers were equally responsive to boys and girls they responded more to girls when they were nearby. Boys received attention *wherever* they were in the room. Girls are learning that to be heard, they must be near. Boys are learning that they will be acknowledged whether they are nearer or farther away. Disruptive actions got the girls little actual attention. Boys learned that such behaviors elicited a marked adult response.

Serbin and his colleagues also investigated adult attention to the cognitive skills of children. Three forms of teacher instruction were more often directed to boys who requested attention: extended direction, extended conversation, and brief directions. It seems that teachers were not only more likely to respond to boys' requests for help, but they also gave more information to boys. Such differential responses of teachers were also observed in situations where the children did not seek adult help. Overall, then, such differences in teacher attention can be seen as enhancing what are typically found as male skills. Among nursery school children, Birns (1976) notes that "the exploratory, autonomous, independent mathematical skills typical of males may indeed be partially programmed by these differences in teachers' behaviors" (p. 248).

Fagot (1978b) observed somewhat similar teacher behaviors in a play group of children 18 months to 58 months. The children attended for four hours weekly, in two different classes. Although the total amount of peer and teacher reinforcement received by boys and girls was not very different, girls did receive more positive comments and boys marginally more negative comments. Teachers tended more to reward boys who chose to play with tasks of high complexity. They did not differentially so reward girls. High activity level in girls received few rewards. In boys it resulted additionally in positive peer feedback. Thus, this study also showed that sex stereotyped choices by boys and girls gained positive peer and teacher reactions for both sexes. Teachers gave boys more positive feedback when they engaged in tasks that are precursors for academic behaviors. They rewarded boys for more intellectually stimulating accomplishments.

Child care findings

Honig and Wittmer (1981) observed 50

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toddlers 24 to 30 months old in metropolitan child care centers serving low-income families. Sequential observations, which permitted analysis of the *chains* of responses of the toddlers and caregivers, were recorded for each child in five different settings typical of child care. Teacher interactions with male and female toddlers were coded under different circumstances. Caregivers did not differ significantly in the number of bids made to male versus female toddlers who were either *nonengaged* or *actively involved in play*. But the adults *did* make significantly more bids to boys who were in circumstances of *need/distress* than to girls. Yet the total number of need/distress behaviors did not differ significantly for boys and girls. Also, caregivers made significantly more bids to male toddlers engaged in negative behaviors, compared to females. Males did engage in significantly more negative behaviors, but the *proportion* responded to by teachers was higher for the boys than for the girls.

In this study, incidence of noncompliance to teacher bids was equal for boys and girls (about 25 percent). Yet caregivers responded to 301 incidents of noncompliance by male toddlers compared to 166 incidents of female noncompliance. In sum, caregivers were responding to significantly higher proportions of need/distress and negative behaviors from boys compared to girls. Honig and Wittmer (1981) conclude that

such results seem to indicate an early pattern of adult *expectancy* of distress and distressing behaviors from males in toddler classrooms and thus a high probability of noticing and responding to such behaviors from males. (p. 7)

Furthermore, teachers gave more negative bids and more mixed bids (combinations of positive or teaching responses with negative bids) to male toddlers compared to females. Honig and Wittmer express concern that caregivers seem to be responding differentially to male and fe-

male toddlers in a way that may be counterproductive for optimal social development. Baumrind (1980) believes that

male toddlers may not be given sufficient nurturance to allow them to learn how to cope successfully with their dependency/distress needs and their needs for positive adult response in order to reach more mature levels of independence. Caregivers gave more aversive responses to the expressive behaviors of male toddlers. The ability to be both expressive as well as agentic has been conceptualized as characteristic of mature sex role identity for both males and females. (p. 8)

Looking at the behaviors initiated by the children, Honig and Wittmer (1982a; 1982b) noted that boys asked for help significantly more than girls and they used more negative means to elicit responses to their expressive needs. Boys made just as many expressive bids to teachers as did girls, but girls made significantly more positive expressive bids such as hugging or crawling into the caregiver's lap. Both boys and girls need adult nurturance and affection. Teachers in child care may need to search out ways to help young male toddlers express these needs. Adults "need to learn to channel male toddlers' needs for control and attention into more appropriate attention-seeking and expressive bids" (Honig and Wittmer 1982a, p. 5). When one looks at the high proportion of boys' negative bids attended to and the significantly greater number of their bids for help, we see that the classroom patterns of teachers giving both more positive and more negative bids to males is not unidirectional. Both teachers and children contribute to keeping a system going by which boys get more attention.

Conclusions

Caregiver and parent differences in treating and responding to male and female children seem to differ from birth onward in ways that reflect what adults be-

lieve to be typical or desirable pathways and behaviors for each sex. Some of these differences reflect a bias toward expecting males to be agentic—to be active, decision makers, and achievers—and expecting girls to be nurturant, submissive, and interpersonally sensitive to others. What is needed is a rethinking of the best wishes for human actualization of both sexes. *Adults need to do more to help both sexes toward achievement and toward tenderness.*

Biological differences and cultural preferences will surely be with us for a long while. But enlightened parents and teachers need to start examining their own beliefs and behaviors. Specifically, certain suggestions can be made. Little boys need an adult to give them the words to get their needs for nurturance met. "Teacher, I need a hug," should be as easily announced by toddler boys as by toddler girls. Caregivers can ask male children if they would like a lap to sit on. Giving children the words to ask for tenderness and affectionate contact can help them communicate such needs. Boys may need help to develop such skills.

Next, adults have to think about the consequences of overprotection of girls. If boys can climb the slide or slither under chairs, then girls can be allowed to also. Giving messages that one is afraid of consequences with one sex but not another will teach fearfulness, not courage. Parents, especially, have been found to allow females the freedom to explore at a much later age than males. This brings up the question of whether some of the spatial advantages that males are consistently found to have may not be enhanced while limitations are put on female uses of neighborhood space.

Cold tones of voice and ignoring the bids of children give a powerful message. Adults thus teach children that expressive needs are disapproved of, perhaps even shameful. These bids are legitimate in preschoolers. Adults must become aware of the critical importance their nurturance has for the development of interpersonal

sensitivities in males. Inadvertently, many teachers and parents, by insensitivity to boy toddlers' dependency needs, may be modeling the lack of interpersonal sensitivity which they complain about in older males.

Caregivers need to celebrate competence in both males and females in *whatever* form competence appears. Leadership roles do not belong only to one sex. Preschool girls with strong leadership qualities can attract boys to play their games too. Five-year-old Deanna was trying to convince her male peers to play house. They wanted to play school. After much arguing, they finally agreed to play house as she suggested. One boy brightened up and argued, "OK. I'll play house with you. I'll be the orangutan!"

Adults who interrupt girls more may give the message that female ideas are not as important as male ideas. Adults need to strike a delicate *balance* between respecting sex role preferences in the classroom and encouraging competence in the chosen play or work of each child, whether boy or girl. The world has need for *many* kinds of competence. The secret of successful caregiving is nurturance of confidence and competence and acceptance of gender roles. What adults can do most to help is to broaden the scope of abilities for both boys and girls. Children of both sexes need to become self-actualized while developing sensitivities to others. Interpersonal skills and agentic capabilities will serve to promote prosocial interactions and success in the small society of young children and, later, in the larger society of adult citizens.

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"THESE KIDS TODAY"



EVERY child is color coded at birth. Its name is typed on a pink-for-girl, blue-for-boy card that is placed at the head of the hospital bassinet. It is wrapped in a pink or blue blanket in the nursery lest an observer forget it is a girl or a boy, and mistake it for a baby.

All babies are born the same color — a blue-gray translucence. Only with the first breath does each baby change from blue-gray to black or white or brown or yellow. All children come out equal, but quickly race is noted, sex is checked, and the world begins the process of imprinting on that baby what it wants from a brown girl, a black boy, a white girl, a yellow boy. The expectations vary for each race, sex, and social class.

"The little boy screams leaving his mother's womb and in the delivery room they say, 'He's all boy,'" observed Dr. Robert E. Gould. "The girl screams and yells and they ignore it till she smiles and then they say, 'Isn't she pretty? She'll be a heart-breaker when she grows up.' Early on they learn what is approved, what is not approved. It starts from day one. A little boy is born, you throw it up in the air, catch it. Nobody would throw a little girl baby, she's too fragile. What a difference in the way you handle the babies at the age of one day. Long before they understand the language, they understand the non-verbal communication."

One active feminist experimented with her newborn. As she wheeled the baby in the carriage she would tell some passersby that the baby was a boy. "My, he looks strong," they would remark and take a swipe at "his" arm. When she said that the baby was a girl, "she" would be patted, stroked, and

told "she" was pretty. The mother had proof positive, right in her own neighborhood, of how differently boys and girls are treated. One day the baby could tolerate swipes, another day the same baby could only endure a soft pat. Strength and sex-role behavior are only in the eye of the beholder.

A baby's sex is all important. Few hospitals are radical enough to wrap all babies in yellow or type BABY CARMICHAEL on the identifying card. In 1977 we are still stuck in the girl/boy rut. The first question anyone asks after a birth is, "What is it?" The questioner is asking the sex with an assumption that when the sex of a child is known a great deal about that child has been revealed.

Lois Gould wrote a fanciful story about a child whose sex was hidden from all except itself and its parents. *X: A Fabulous Child's Story* tells the tale of a special experiment to raise an X, a child, not a boy or a girl. Adults in the story were confounded and embarrassed by an X. They knew the appropriate toys and clothing to give girls and boys, but what did you give an X? Even X's schoolmates were at first disturbed and later radicalized by X's freedom to basket weave and shoot baskets, to race and bake.

The parents at X's school were disturbed by X's disruptive influence. Girls were not acting like girls, boys were not acting like boys. The parents feared dire consequences and labeled X "Problem Number One." So X underwent a psychiatric examination and, no surprise to non-sexists, passed with flying colors. The psychiatrist reported, "In my opinion, young X here . . . is just about the *least* mixed-up child I've ever Xamined! . . . X has absolutely no identity problem! X isn't one bit mixed up! As for being a misfit — ridiculous! X knows perfectly well what it is! Don't you, X?" The doctor winked. X winked back.

"But what *is* X?" shrieked Peggy and Joe's parents. "We still want to know what it is!"

"Ah, yes," said the doctor, winking again. "Well, don't worry. You'll all know one of these days. And you won't need me to tell you."

"What? What does he mean?" some of the parents grumbled suspiciously.

"Susie and Peggy and Joe all answered at once. 'He means that by the time X's sex matters, it won't be a secret any more!'"

In Lois Gould's fantasy world X won't have sex-linked behavior forced upon it until it neaps maturity and its primary and secondary sex characteristics matter. She challenges us to raise X's and the baby Y, who appears at the end of the story, as well as W's and Z's of our own. Gould's message is clear: we should stop thinking of children as girls and boys.

"Think of children as people. Too many think of them as boys and girls," says Mark Lundeen of the Bank Street College of Education in New York City. "They are not thinking of childhood as a developmental stage of people. As long as people are using that terminology, like 'boy and girl,' as long as they are using the flag words, we won't move ahead. If people are talking to you about 'the negroes today' you know where they are at. Anybody who is saying 'boys or girls' is at the same place. There are seldom instances where you should use that. We say, 'There are three children on their sleds.' Most of them are boys, but now our daughter does not feel excluded. She is a child. So are they."

Studies cited in Eleanor Emmons Maccoby and Carol Nagy Jacklin's *The Psychology of Sex Differences* illustrate the different ways boys and girls are treated. Though they find no conclusive proof that children *consistently* are treated differently because of their sexes, they do find that children are reinforced for engaging in sex-typed behavior. So boys will be boys and girls will be girls. Or boys will be as they are told boys should be, and the same goes for girls.

Children realize very early that there are two sexes. Some professionals think a child knows her sexual identity by the age of six months; others say eighteen months is the age of identification. In addition to learning there are two sexes, children learn that one is more highly valued than the other. Blue is better than pink. The king in a deck of cards is higher

than the queen. "He" comes before "she" in a sentence. The sexist lesson is everywhere. Male is considered better than female.

In *The Liberated Man*, Warren Farrell asserts that children of kindergarten age prefer the activities of the male parent. The man who goes out into the world is viewed as more exciting. "My three-year-old says she wants to be a man when she grows up," says one big-city reporter home on her second maternity leave. "She doesn't remember when I went out to work every day. Now Jim is seen as fun. I'm the drudge."

Almost every nursery-school staff can tick off the names and stories of little girls who wanted to be, or insisted they were, boys. Much scarcer are the tales of boys who wanted to be girls. Both girls and boys who see their mothers without power, money, or respect want to avoid growing up and assuming the same position.

Sigmund Freud labeled penis envy as one of the afflictions women suffer. Some in the psychological professions still believe penis envy is organ envy. They don't understand that there's a great difference between "Gee, what is that?" and "I want one — I'm incomplete without one."

"The woman suffering this terrible trauma, realizing she doesn't have what a man has, is not what the people of my school, the interpersonal school of psychological thinking, believe," offers Dr. Robert E. Gould. "This all symbolizes what is better about being a man than a woman in this world, wholly symbolized by the penis, man's much more powerful role in this world, more advantageous role. If women had all the advantages the men had and the men were as disadvantaged as the women, then we would find men would have vagina envy and breast envy — symbolic of what makes the woman different. After all, the breast is much more obvious to a child than a penis. The child is on the breast, sees the breast — there are two of them, and often they are probably less covered than a penis. One would think there would be breast envy — the child even has the experience of knowing what the breast can do, and doesn't know what a penis can do. I really think this makes for the differences between the sexes. All little girls say

they want to be little boys. Why? Because they know that little boys have it so much better in this world. Penis envy was a very true thing about the power of men. As a biological theory it is not valid."

Penis envy. Penis pride. There is tremendous reverence for children with penises — they hold the power. More than one preschool teacher had stories affirming that little girls know boys are more powerful. "In our school the girls ask the boys, 'Will you marry me?' " said one preschool teacher. "The boys get to say, 'Yes' or 'No.' They have the power, the girls think so."

Many feminist families have tried to explain to their boy children what it is like to be female, to be without power, in our culture. Some parents are more successful than others in making the secondary position of females real to the sons. One New England parent who has tried to develop her son's sensitivity to the oppression of women and minorities is nonetheless pessimistic about the possibilities of undoing the message of the culture. "My son has lived through the slogans. We have a poster of Joan of Arc over the supper table that reads, 'I have to go home now and fix supper.' The issue of sharing housework is part of our lives. Randy does half the housework, sews his own buttons. I have worked for ten years, but somehow the idea that men are superior to women, or that men enjoy options denied women, is so societally ingrained that I think at best you can get a sexist child who feels guilty about it. He'll catch himself every once in a while. We have to strive for it.

"I think it is near impossible to raise non-racist children. My husband works with poor black families in his family-care medical practice. A good portion of our close friends are black, but still my kids feel kindly and compassionate toward black kids. They have heard the stories about how hard it is for black people, but I suspect they feel different and still slightly superior. At least they are attributing that to circumstance, not heredity, but they think black kids are poor kids."

Although feminist families often experience the fight against sexism as three-steps-forward-and-two-steps-back,

there is at least that one step ahead. What is in it for our children if we are able to break through the sex-role stereotypes and raise them as free, fair-minded human beings? The assets are seen in high relief when contrasted with what has been the norm.

What will non-sexist childraising do for girls?

1. You can be a success. You don't have to marry a successful man, or marry to be successful yourself.
2. You can dream your dreams and live them, too.
3. You can celebrate your strength.
4. You can celebrate and parade your intelligence.
5. You won't be judged by your looks alone.
6. You can know that aggressive and feminine traits can coexist in the same woman.
7. You will know your own life will not stop with the birth of your children. You will share the parenting, housework and child care with the children's father.
8. You won't be pitied if you mother only girls. You won't bask in praise if you mother a son.
9. You won't worry that you're a bad mother if you leave your children to go to work.
10. You can admit your sexuality.
11. You can like or loathe things without questioning your womanliness:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| a. ballet and music | g. miniatures |
| b. spectator sports | h. flowers |
| c. contact sports | i. carpentry and tools |
| d. guns | j. add whatever made you |
| e. cars | doubt yourself |
| f. clothes | |

12. You will suffer less alcoholism and mental depression.
13. You can rest easy making more money than a man, even if that man is your husband.

What will non-sexist childraising do for boys?

1. You will know you aren't destined to be the sole support of your wife and kids. You will have a partner in your wife.

2. You will know you don't have to be a hulking football player before you're allowed to do needlepoint.
3. You can cry unashamedly when you are hurt. You can sport a flaccid upper lip.
4. You can compete and admit when you've lost.
5. You can admit fear. Your emotions needn't be kept under wraps.
6. You can acknowledge affection for a man, even hug and kiss him.
7. You can be close friends with a woman. You need not consider her a sex object or "a piece of ass."
8. You will be independent and competent in life's skills — cooking, cleaning, sewing, laundry, child care.
9. You can like or loathe things without questioning your manliness:

a. ballet and music	g. miniatures
b. spectator sports	h. flowers
c. contact sports	i. carpentry and tools
d. guns	j. add whatever made you
e. cars	doubt yourself
f. clothes	
10. You won't be considered a lesser man if you father only girls. You won't be considered a "real stud" if you produce boys.
11. You will suffer fewer heart attacks and ulcers.
12. You won't measure your worth by the size of your paycheck — or your penis.

Some children are already reaping the harvest of non-sexist upbringing. Their young consciousnesses are raised. They see their own horizons as defined by personality and choice, not by sex.

"Our six-year-old daughter has a sense of herself as a pioneer child. She knows she is a different breed of girl," reports a parent proudly. "She told us this wonderful story about being with Chip and some other kids who said, 'Girls can't throw a ball as far as boys can.' 'Oh, yes, girls can!' she announced. Now, she told us this story very dramatically —

how she stepped up, took the ball, and threw it farther than any of them! She has a great feeling of excitement."

"My kid is a five-year-old feminist," says one mother in publishing. "The only T-shirts she wants to wear either have a picture of Wonder Woman or are printed with feminist slogans. At five she's a militant feminist."

"My eight-year-old daughter brought home a workbook from school last year with some sexist examples that she picked up very quickly and pointed out to me," said one psychiatrist mother. "The workbook asked, Which toys do girls like to play with? There was a kite and a ball and a doll. 'Well, how am I supposed to answer this one?' she asked me. 'I know what they mean, but that's not fair.' She had thought through what they expected of her and refused to buckle under."

"At five, Sarah is no longer an innocent feminist, no longer naïve," says a mother. "She's had some experiences with sex prejudice. Now she is savvy. We talk about 'they' and 'we.' Sarah has applied it to her life. When she sees something on TV, or someone says something that is degrading to women, Sarah will comment, 'Mama, they think girls are afraid, but we know better, don't we?' We certainly do."

One mother who came to feminism ten years ago, long after her son who is now a college student was out of diapers, thinks he may well be less sexist than his classmates even though his formative years were over before her feminism was formed. She considers her role in his consciousness raising important, but feels his continuing education is in the hands of his peers. "His contemporaries, his women friends raise his consciousness and direct his behavior. Since he is a junior now, I guess he should be thinking about making a living. I am encouraging him to take the course that will broaden him as a person. While with my daughters, I find myself saying, 'Think about business. Try those hard courses. Don't avoid economics because you think you may not do well.' I guess I'm doing the reverse of the traditional. But I assume my son will earn a living, so I'm encouraging the part of him society may ignore, and the same for my daughters."

Many teachers are in a quandary about how to interest students in sexism on a deeper level. "The sophomores I teach are jaded about sexism," complains one high-school teacher. "They've had it all. They've heard the anti-sexist line in elementary school and in junior high, but they know this society wants gentle, quiet women and tough men. So far, I've been unable to interest them on a more substantial level. I think the kids are very aware on a superficial level of the whole popularity of sexism. They can talk about it. The kids see very clearly and very differently the roles of mother and father. They see that mother takes care of us. The mother may work, but she also cooks all the meals and makes sure we are on schedule.

"Even the high-school kids who are highly politicized and very sensitive sound sexist some of the time. They are only human and the language, for example, has only been liberated the last couple of years. The other day a boy got up in town meeting to argue a point he felt strongly about. He said, 'Will the chairman . . .' and another kid piped up, correcting him, 'chairPERSON.' The boy nodded, acknowledged his mistake, and began again. 'Will the chairman . . .' again the correction, 'chairPERSON.' The boy knew what was fair, wanted to use the right terminology, but the word 'chairman' was so ingrained that he couldn't remember to use the politically correct word in the heat of the moment. He was too busy worrying about the substance of his argument."

The liberation of children is under way. Not all children have been touched by liberation, and not all who have been touched have been liberated. But more and more children and adolescents are learning that cooking, sewing, and cleaning are tasks *people*, not just women, do. They are being taught respect for both sexes. They are being told their options are open, and some are believing what they've been told.

"I'm really impressed with the way these kids talk, very matter of fact," says one Long Island guidance counselor. "The girls think nothing of planning to be veterinarians or lawyers. They are thinking of careers — plural. They are flexible and can see themselves in one profession or another. When I was

a little girl I thought I'd be a secretary or a teacher, like my mother. One of my friends aspired to be a diplomat's wife. This year I have all seniors. The women are a very different breed."

Yes, the women growing up today are a very different breed. Besides taking control of their own careers, they are also learning to take control of their own bodies. "We're raising some very macho little girls these days," commented one father. "I see my son's friends. Some of those girls are tough — I wouldn't want to mess with them. I'm surprised he gets along so well. Can we raise children who are strong without their being tough? I don't know." Another parent, a mother, defends teaching her daughter to be tough: "I'd rather have her tough — and even obnoxious — than passive. I don't want her pushed around. She's going to get a lot of humility lessons, just being a woman. I'm not going to give her one."

Sports has been one arena where the players with the best control over their bodies, singularly or as a team, had a good chance of controlling the game, and winning. They won pennants and trophies and conference titles for downing opponents. They acquired pride in their bodies and developed strength just by competing. The stereotypic picture has actually been true to life. The boys played and the girls cheered them on. Boys trained their bodies for a season of their chosen sport. Out of that some got sports scholarships to college. The fellows who got through the season ended up with developed muscles and physical endurance. All the girls developed were large thigh muscles from practicing the cheerleader's jump, or hip bruises from marching with a megaphone clasped too tightly to their sides. Boys got in shape. Girls were a shape.

Sadly, too many girls who were rejected as pompom shakers felt worthless. So did the guys who never made the squad. Nobody cared if the washout who had been number 14 was in shape or not. When they judged him inadequate, they threw him off the bench. Dr. Melvin Levine, a pediatrician at Children's Hospital in Boston, reports that he sees boys of eight and nine who can't catch a ball. They feel like third-class citi-

zens. They're afraid to go down to the bus stop. The chances of a little boy taking dancing or collecting butterflies are pretty slim. He's only supposed to be a tough hockey end. These troubled boys come in with headaches, bellyaches, wounded self-esteem.

"We have sports that the bad athlete can play. We encourage them to play the great equalizers, those sports nobody does well. In America, the schlep kid can play soccer as well as the good one. These kids even like crab soccer, where the kids get down on their backs and walk like crabs. They kick this huge medicine ball. The non-athletes love it. We try to get these bad athletes not to play sports. I am the state champion gym-excuse writer. I'm an ally. We greatly exaggerate body consciousness in this country."

Many parents and teachers are actively de-emphasizing "making the team" or winning the division championship. "To paraphrase, it matters not how he plays the game. I don't care if he does play the game," admitted a parent. "I don't like sports and I am not embarrassed to tell him that. I don't have to throw a ball around with him to be a good father. I'm liberated enough to know that. But is he? I don't know. Peer pressure is tremendous," said a non-athletic father.

"I don't like sports" and "We frown on competitive team sports" was an often-repeated theme. It applied to boys as well as girls. "Being on something like a tennis team is the best," offered another parent. "There's an individual challenge and a team spirit, without the head bashing craziness you see in other sports."

While the pressure to excel in sports is easing on boys, it is increasing on girls. "Will girls be humiliated if they don't earn their letter? I hope not!" said one mother. "I love to see girls play in teams," said another, the mother of two boys. "I watched two women's teams playing softball today and things are different. They play. They are serious. If the third-base player missed the ball and the other team got a triple on what should have been a single, nobody laughed. Nobody looked over at her boyfriend and giggled. They were there to play, not show off."

One father of a boy and a girl likes having both his kids in Little League. Showing off a picture of both kids suited up for a game, he confided, "I can dine out on this picture in liberal feminist circles. Caroline started in Little League in California, where if you can walk, you can play. She turned out to be a good hitter, after she spent time in the field and learned some skills. Here in New York, at least on the West Side of Manhattan, an unskilled boy or girl has a problem. You have no place to learn the skills. You can play only if you have the experience. How do you get the experience? Of the four West Side Little League teams, only four players are girls."

The women who have grown up athletic in America, even those who have made the Olympic team, admit it has been difficult to reconcile femininity and athletic bodies. A group of young female Olympic athletes discussed their experiences on a television talk show. Women are taught, they said, and encouraged not to be strong so they will conform to the classic idea of what a beautiful woman is. Muscles are not considered beautiful on a female body. "Look at my legs," offered a non-Olympic dancer. "These muscles are just too developed to be sexually attractive. They don't make it when compared with the ideal."

If the ideal woman isn't allowed to have muscles, we must change the ideal. Athena doesn't look like a shrinking violet in marble. What about her? Wonder Woman lifts cars and displays superhuman strength. Wonder Woman, however, couldn't be a candidate for a strong-looking ideal woman. Take a look at her — there's not a developed muscle in sight.

Men are supposed to be strong; women are supposed to be weak. Men are supposed to be aggressive; women are supposed to be passive. The fact that our society demands different behavior and different achievement from boys and from girls sometimes has dire consequences.

One parent explained how sexist attitudes interfered with her son's development: "They said he was rowdy and slow 'because he's a boy.' It turns out he doesn't see things straight. He has a learning disability. They wanted to ignore the symp-

toms because he is a boy." Dr. Melvin Levine asserts, "Here and all over the world there is a seven to one ratio, boys to girls, in who has problems." Admissions to mental hospitals for patients of pediatric age are six or seven to one, boys. "That," offers Dr. Levine, "may well be a secondary reaction to cultural conditioning that does not allow boys to express fear. Because we are culturally less demanding of girls to achieve and more demanding of boys, the boys get referred to us younger. The strategy of failures is different for boys and for girls. Girls adopt a very quiet, passive, inconspicuous, compulsive, very neat posture. They fade into the wall. The same problems in boys will show up by their raising hell, smashing everything in sight. What we find is that because of the styles they adopt, the average age of the girls referred to us is much older than the boys. Teachers and parents are more likely to refer a boy who is destroying everything, and not worry about a quiet girl. What happens is the girl has a worse chance to recover."

Severely troubled youngsters, as well as officially untroubled ones, would benefit if "boys played house more often, and girls played war," says Dr. Levine. Boys have been taught to deny their own softness, or at best to hide it in shame. "In this day and age it is still a shock for me to see a boy cry in school," observes one elementary school teacher. "It is embarrassing for the class and the child. Girls can cry. It's expected."

Even the parents who preach "you can cry if you want to" to their sons often have trouble dealing with the tears. "Russell, who is eight, tells me it is okay to cry and he fights for that right. Considering my upbringing, crying is hard for me," says a divorced mother. "My family told me, 'Come on, you can handle it.' Crying to me was weak."

"Children cry. Anybody who says a boy shouldn't cry is a sexist pig. Anybody who 'has trouble' with a little boy's tears should have her head examined," said an irate mother.

"We talk about crying in a course I teach," said a high-school teacher. "The kids say it is wrong. They see their

mothers cry, but hardly ever their fathers. Boys share a whole lot about crying as kids and being spanked if they kept crying."

"It's All Right to Cry" daily blares forth from many "Free to Be You and Me" phonograph albums. The children are listening; so, apparently, are the politicians. What a far cry 1976 was from 1972 — literally! In 1972, Edmund Muskie's presidential campaign hit the skids after the country watched him cry in the snows of New Hampshire. He read a dirty-trick letter conceived by the Nixon pranksters, and it reduced him to tears. Four short years later presidential nominees of both parties cried on television. Gerald Ford teared up on returning to his home turf in Michigan. Jimmy Carter cried to his friends in Plains, Georgia, thanking them for the help that elected him. In two election years, four years apart, three national politicians — men — spilled over with tears. In 1972, Edmund Muskie was done in by crying. In 1976 two crying men survived. Clearly, the times are changing. Centuries-old patterns of childraising are being eroded and broken down. The sex-role track children are set in at birth is being buried. Some parents and professionals, however, caution about rocking the sexist boat. They ask, "Is it healthy to do so?"

"Just because we don't know exactly what the differences are between male and female doesn't mean they don't exist," warned a senior faculty member of a school of education. Another educator cautioned that until we know the consequences of changing the way we bring up boys and girls, we shouldn't alter anything. That, however, becomes a chicken-or-egg-first question. If we are going to move, we are told to do it slowly — to take it easy lest we upset the mystical balance of the sexes and somehow undermine all of Western civilization.

Western civilization could do with some shaking up. Would the Western world, or the Eastern world for that matter, be in the state it is if women had had a bigger part to play? The world of our children has a better chance of surviving and flourishing if both sexes share the direction.

AN EQUAL APPROACH

By Marion O'Brien

"It's a boy!"
"It's a girl!"

At the moment of birth, these words cap months of waiting and wondering. Throughout pregnancy, you—with the help and advice of well-meaning friends, neighbors, and grandparents—have speculated about the sex of the child, have developed and discarded lists of names, and have decorated the nursery in preparation for the new baby.

During these months of waiting, a less obvious but probably more influential process has also been going on. You have been developing attitudes toward your new baby, attitudes that are heavily influenced by tradition and folklore.

In the first minutes after the birth, doctors and nurses unknowingly contribute to these attitudes. Without thinking, they may be influencing the way you will feel about your baby, and eventually how your baby's personality will be shaped.

"What a beautiful baby! So delicate, such fine features." A girl, of course.

"A fine, sturdy baby! So alert and strong." Naturally, a boy.

In themselves, of course, the words are harmless. So are the pink and blue blankets and name tags most hospital nurseries use. And the frilly little dresses or tiny overalls your baby receives as gifts.

It is the social stereotypes represented by these expressions, and the implications for parents' actions that can thwart our society's best intentions to treat boys and girls, males and females, as equals.

If—in our minds—baby girls are *delicate, sweet, soft, and cuddly*, whereas baby boys are *sturdy, strong, active, and alert*, then the likelihood is that we will try to protect our daughters, worry about them more, and feel more warmly toward them. Similarly, we will be in-

clined to encourage boys' physical activity and exploration, set higher standards for boys, and be more strict with them.

In fact, many psychologists who have observed parents and their new babies find these patterns of behavior occurring frequently. Think of your own experience and that of your friends, and you are likely to recognize a situation like this one: A six-month-old, just beginning to crawl, reaches out toward a stuffed animal. The baby loses its balance and rolls over onto its back, letting out a brief cry. If the baby's name is Kate, her mother is likely to come over to her, rub her tummy, and hand her the toy, saying soothingly, "That's all right, Katie. Here's your bunny." If the baby's name is Kevin, when Mom comes, she is likely to pick up the toy, shake it above his head, and say, "C'mon, Kevin, you can get the bunny. Just give it another try."

Both responses can be considered "good parenting." Both mothers are aware of their children's needs and ready to respond to their baby's cry. But it doesn't take a lot of imagination to see how these different reactions, repeated day after day, encourage very different behavior in the children. Kate is being taught to call for help, to depend on others who will provide what she wants, and to be passive. Kevin is being encouraged to ignore minor hurts, to be persistent, and to take direct action toward a goal.

Of course, no parent always responds to a child the same way all the time. At times, Kate will be asked to do things for herself, and Kevin will be helped. But the *pattern* is real and consistent in many households. Without realizing it, the mothers of these tiny babies are teaching styles of behavior

that have lifelong consequences.

A noted child development specialist and Harvard professor, Jerome Kagan, explains, "Each parent possesses an idea of one perfect set of traits for males and another for females. These ideas are, of course, influenced by the values of the culture. The parents' actions usually are attempts to mold the child in accord with the cultural standards."

Most psychologists agree that stereotypes about boys and girls have a basis in real differences between the sexes. All parents know that boys and girls are different in their temperaments, their interests, their approaches to life. The goal of greater equality is not to erase these differences, or even minimize them. Instead, as parents, we owe our children—boys and girls—a chance to grow in whatever direction their individual talents take them. They should not, in other words, be limited by a narrow view of what is "right" for a boy or a girl.

Granted, often we cannot change our own feelings. They have been part of us all our lives. But being aware of our own—and society's—stereotypes can help us keep from imposing them on our children.

What follows are some suggestions for you, as a parent, to help encourage your son or daughter to develop more fully as an individual.

- Make a concerted effort to rough-house with both boys and girls. Too often, parents, particularly fathers, confine their active play to boys, handling their daughters gently and soothingly. But it may be that rough-and-tumble play, involving the whole body, is one way boys begin to develop confidence in their abilities. We owe our daughters the same early start at physical activity.

- Talk to your baby a lot, and respond to the baby's "talking" with more talking. Research shows that both fathers and mothers tend to talk more to girls, and mothers also respond to girls' early chatter with more conversation. Some psychologists have hypothesized that this early difference explains why girls begin talking earlier and are often better

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at verbal skills than are boys. At any rate, we should try to talk a lot to *all* babies, and especially to respond when they babble or "talk" to us.

- Give both boys and girls freedom to explore without hovering over them. A complete childproofing of your house coupled with your discreet supervision will let both girls and boys have freedom of movement once they begin to crawl. Your approval of the baby's exploration and examination of household objects as well as toys will help encourage curi-

osity and independence, traits that are valuable for both boys and girls.

- Join in the baby's play as much as you can. Whether because boys' toys are more attractive to adults, or boys make more demands, parents tend to join in the play of young boys more often than they do girls' play. We should try to make time to join in the play of both boys and girls as often as we can.

- Try not to praise boys and girls only for playing with toys considered "correct" for their sex, and particularly try not to criticize boys who are playing with girls' toys such as dolls. Boys and girls definitely have different play interests, be-

ginning in very early childhood. Most of us have no desire to change these interests, and it is doubtful we could if we wanted to. But it isn't necessary to discourage girls from feeding and tending their "babies" in order to encourage other types of play as well, such as active outdoor play, for example, or block building. With boys, too, we can provide opportunities for and encourage quiet play with art materials at some times while enjoying our sons' efforts to climb trees at other times.

- Set a single standard for child behavior and stick to it. Often parents, particularly fathers, tend to be stricter with sons and punish them more frequently and more severely. But if our expectations for girls and boys are equal, we should enforce a single standard by praising and encouraging what we like rather than punishing what we don't like.

- Consider each request for help individually. Observations of parents with their young children show they tend to criticize boys' requests for help while responding happily to similar requests from girls. Perhaps we should try to use a situational approach in order to be more equal in our treatment of requests. If help is truly needed, then our response to a request should be positive—for both boys and girls. When help is not needed, when a child is capable of working out the problem for himself or herself, then we should encourage the child to solve it independently.

- Encourage all preschoolers to help with family and housekeeping chores. To avoid stereotyped jobs—girls helping with the dishes and boys carrying out the trash, for example—we should try to set up regular chores for all children. If there's more than one child in the family, children's jobs can rotate from week to week. This probably works best in families where both parents share the housework, but is a worthwhile effort even if this is not the case.

Equal treatment of boys and girls beginning at birth and continuing through childhood is not going to create carbon copies. Each child's individual personality and perhaps some inherent biological differences continue to act to produce unique human beings—different, but equal. ☐

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"An Equal Approach," by Marion O'Brien.
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Mother's Manual.

Once upon a time, a baby named X was born. This baby was named X so that nobody could tell whether it was a boy or a girl. Its parents could tell, of course, but they couldn't tell anybody else. They couldn't even tell Baby X, at first.

You see, it was all part of a very important Secret Scientific Xperiment, known officially as Project Baby X. The smartest scientists had set up this

Xperiment at a cost of Xactly 23 billion dollars and 72 cents, which might seem like a lot for just one baby, even a very important Xperimental baby. But when you remember the prices of things like strained carrots and stuffed bunnies, and popcorn for the movies and booster shots for camp, let alone 28 shiny quar-

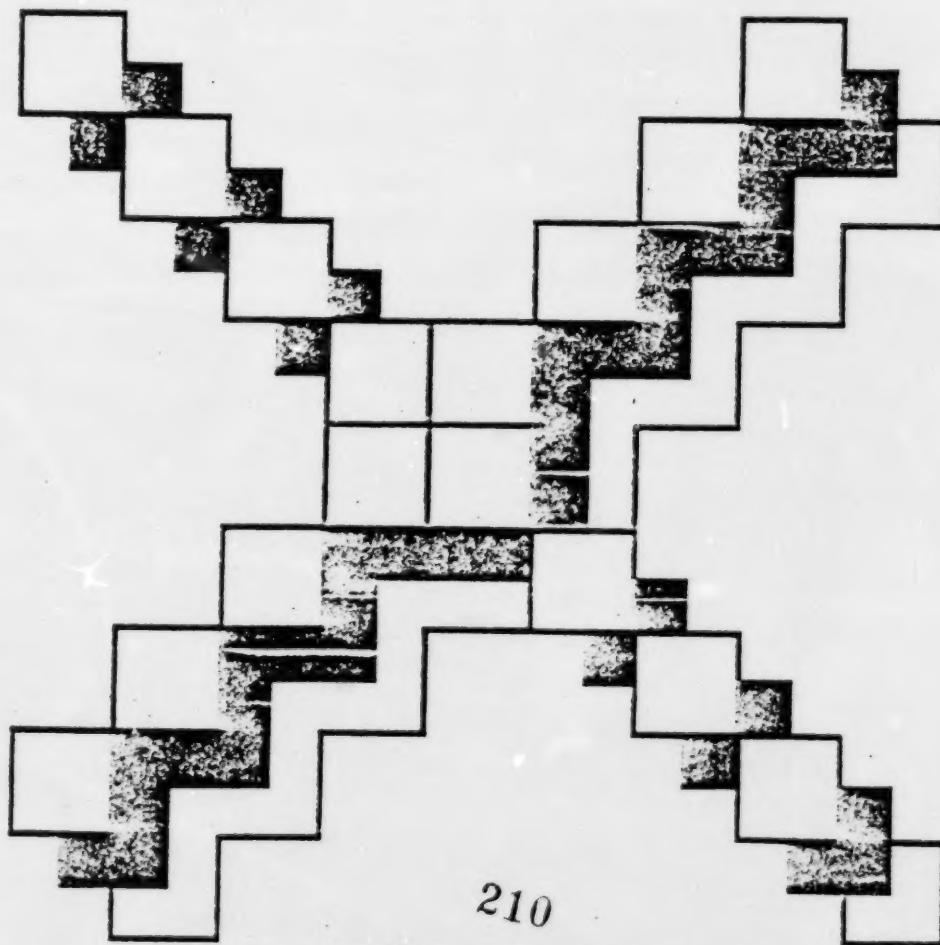
ters from the tooth fairy, you begin to see how it adds up.

Also, long before Baby X was born, all those scientists had to be paid to work out the details of the Xperiment, and to write the *Official Instruction Manual* for Baby X's parents and, most important of all, to find the right set of parents to bring up Baby X. These parents had to be selected very carefully. Thousands of volunteers had to

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take thousands of tests and answer thousands of tricky questions. Almost everybody failed because, it turned out, almost everybody really wanted either a baby boy or a baby girl, and not Baby X at all. Also, almost everybody was afraid that a Baby X would be a lot more trouble than a boy or a girl. (They were probably right, the scientists admitted, but Baby X needed parents who wouldn't *mind* the Xtra trouble.)

There were families with grandparents named Milton and Agatha, who didn't see why the baby couldn't be named Milton or Agatha instead of X, even if it *was* an X. There were families with aunts who insisted on knitting tiny dresses and uncles who insisted on sending tiny baseball mitts. Worst of all, there were families that already had other children who couldn't be trusted to keep the secret. Certainly not if they knew the secret was worth 23 billion dollars and 72 cents—and all you had to do was take one little peek at Baby X in the bathtub to know if it was a boy or a girl.

But, finally, the scientists found the Joneses, who really wanted to raise an X more than any other kind of baby—no matter how much trouble it would be. Ms. and Mr. Jones had to promise they would take equal turns caring for X, and feeding it, and singing it lullabies. And they had to promise never to hire any baby-sitters. The government scientists knew perfectly well that a baby-sitter would probably peek at X in the bathtub, too.

The day the Joneses brought their baby home, lots of friends and relatives came over to see it. None of them knew about the secret Xperiment, though. So the first thing they asked was what kind of a baby X was. When the Joneses smiled and said, "It's an X!" nobody knew what to say. They couldn't say, "Look at her cute little dimples!" And they couldn't say, "Look at his husky little biceps!" And they couldn't even say just plain "kitchy-coo." In fact, they all thought the Joneses were playing some kind of rude joke.

But, of course, the Joneses were not joking. "It's an X" was absolutely all

they would say. And that made the friends and relatives very angry. The relatives all felt embarrassed about having an X in the family. "People will think there's something wrong with it!" some of them whispered. "There *is* something wrong with it!" others whispered back.

"Nonsense!" the Joneses told them all cheerfully. "What could possibly be wrong with this perfectly adorable X?"

Nobody could answer that, except Baby X, who had just finished its bottle. Baby X's answer was a loud, satisfied burp.

Clearly, nothing at all was wrong. Nevertheless, none of the relatives felt comfortable about buying a present for a Baby X. The cousins who sent the baby a tiny football helmet would not come and visit any more. And the neighbors who sent a pink-flowered romper suit pulled their shades down when the Joneses passed their house.

The *Official Instruction Manual* had warned the new parents that this would happen, so they didn't fret about it. Besides, they were too busy with Baby X and the hundreds of different Exercises for treating it properly.

Ms. and Mr. Jones had to be Xtra careful about how they played with little X. They knew that if they kept bouncing it up in the air and saying how *strong* and *active* it was, they'd be treating it more like a boy than an X. But if all they did was cuddle it and kiss it and tell it how *sweet* and *dainty* it was, they'd be treating it more like a girl than an X.

On page 1,654 of the *Official Instruction Manual*, the scientists prescribed: "plenty of bouncing and plenty of cuddling, *both*. X ought to be strong and sweet and active. Forget about *dainty* altogether."

Meanwhile, the Joneses were worrying about other problems. Toys, for instance. And clothes. On his first shopping trip, Mr. Jones told the store clerk, "I need some clothes and toys for my new baby." The clerk smiled and said, "Well, now, is it a boy or a girl?" "It's an X," Mr. Jones said, smiling back. But the clerk got all red

in the face and said huffily, "In *that* case, I'm afraid I can't help you, sir." So Mr. Jones wandered helplessly up and down the aisles trying to find what X needed. But everything in the store was piled up in sections marked "Boys" or "Girls." There were "Boys' Pajamas" and "Girls' Underwear" and "Boys' Fire Engines" and "Girls' Housekeeping Sets." Mr. Jones went home without buying anything for X. That night he and Ms. Jones consulted page 2,326 of the *Official Instruction Manual*. "Buy plenty of everything!" it said firmly.

So they bought plenty of sturdy blue pajamas in the Boys' Department and cheerful flowered underwear in the Girls' Department. And they bought all kinds of toys. A boy doll that made pee-pee and cried, "Pa-pa." And a girl doll that talked in three languages and said, "I am the Pres-i-dent of Gen-er-al Mo-tors." They also bought a storybook about a brave princess who rescued a handsome prince from his ivory tower, and another one about a sister and brother who grew up to be a baseball star and a ballet star, and you had to guess which *was* which.

The head scientists of Project Baby X checked all their purchases and told them to keep up the good work. They also reminded the Joneses to see page 4,629 of the *Manual*, where it said, "Never make Baby X feel *embarrassed* or *ashamed* about what it wants to play with. And if X gets dirty climbing rocks, never say 'Nice little Xes don't get dirty climbing rocks.'"

Likewise, it said, "If X falls down and cries, never say 'Brave little Xes don't cry.' Because, of course, nice little Xes *do* get dirty, and brave little Xes *do* cry. No matter how dirty X gets, or how hard it cries, don't worry. It's all part of the Xperiment."

Whenever the Joneses pushed Baby X's stroller in the park, smiling strangers would come over and coo: "Is that a boy or a girl?" The Joneses would smile back and say, "It's an X." The strangers would stop smiling then, and often snarl something nasty—as if the Joneses had snarled at *them*.

By the time X grew big enough to

play with other children, the Joneses' troubles had grown bigger, too. Once a little girl grabbed X's shovel in the sandbox, and zonked X on the head with it. "Now, now, Tracy," the little girl's mother began to scold, "little girls mustn't hit little—" and she turned to ask X, "Are you a little boy or a little girl, dear?"

Mr. Jones, who was sitting near the sandbox, held his breath and crossed his fingers.

X smiled politely at the lady, even though X's head had never been zonked so hard in its life. "I'm a little X," X replied.

"You're a *what*?" the lady exclaimed angrily. "You're a little b-r-a-t, you mean!"

"But little girls mustn't hit little Xes, either!" said X, retrieving the shovel with another polite smile. "What good does hitting do, anyway?"

X's father, who was still holding his breath, finally let it out, uncrossed his fingers, and grinned back at X.

And at their next secret Project Baby X meeting, the scientists grinned, too. Baby X was doing fine.

But then it was time for X to start school. The Joneses were really worried about this, because school was even more full of rules for boys and girls, and there were no rules for Xes. The teacher would tell boys to form one line, and girls to form another line. There would be boys' games and girls' games, and boys' secrets and girls' secrets. The school library would have a list of recommended books for girls, and a different list of recommended books for boys. There would even be a bathroom marked BOYS and another one marked GIRLS. Pretty soon boys and girls would hardly talk to each other. What would happen to poor little X?

The Joneses spent weeks consulting their *Instruction Manual* (there were 249½ pages of advice under "First Day of School"), and attending urgent special conferences with the smart scientists of Project Baby X.

The scientists had to make sure that X's mother had taught X how to throw and catch a ball properly, and that X's

father had been sure to teach X what to serve at a doll's tea party. X had to know how to shoot marbles and how to jump rope and, most of all, what to say when the Other Children asked whether X was a Boy or a Girl.

Finally, X was ready. The Joneses helped X button on a nice new pair of red-and-white checked overalls, and sharpened six pencils for X's nice new pencilbox, and marked X's name clearly on all the books in its nice new bookbag. X brushed its teeth and combed its hair, which just about covered its ears, and remembered to put a napkin in its lunchbox.

The Joneses had asked X's teacher if the class could line up alphabetically, instead of forming separate lines for boys and girls. And they had asked if X could use the principal's bathroom, because it wasn't marked anything except BATHROOM. X's teacher promised to take care of all those problems. But nobody could help X with the biggest problem of all—Other Children.

Nobody in X's class had ever known an X before. What would they think? How would X make friends?

You couldn't tell what X was by studying its clothes—overalls don't even button right-to-left, like girls' clothes, or left-to-right, like boys' clothes. And you couldn't guess whether X had a girl's short haircut or a boy's long haircut. And it was very hard to tell by the games X liked to play. Either X played ball very well for a girl, or else X played house very well for a boy.

Some of the children tried to find out by asking X tricky questions, like "Who's your favorite sports star?" That was easy. X had two favorite sports stars: a girl jockey named Robyn Smith and a boy archery champion named Robin Hood. Then they asked, "What's your favorite TV program?" And that was even easier. X's favorite TV program was "Lassie," which stars a girl dog played by a boy dog.

When X said that its favorite toy was a doll, everyone decided that X must be a girl. But then X said that the doll was really a robot, and that X

had computerized it, and that it was programmed to bake fudge brownies and then clean up the kitchen. After X told them that, the other children gave up guessing what X was. All they knew was they'd sure like to see X's doll.

After school, X wanted to play with the other children. "How about shooting some baskets in the gym?" X asked the girls. But all they did was make faces and giggle behind X's back.

"How about weaving some baskets in the arts and crafts room?" X asked the boys. But they all made faces and giggled behind X's back, too.

That night, Ms. and Mr. Jones asked X how things had gone at school. X told them sadly that the lessons were okay, but otherwise school was a terrible place for an X. It seemed as if Other Children would never want an X for a friend.

Once more, the Joneses reached for their *Instruction Manual*. Under "Other Children," they found the following message: "What did you Xpect? *Other Children* have to obey all the silly boy-girl rules, because their parents taught them to. Lucky X—you don't have to stick to the rules at all! All you have to do is be yourself. P.S. We're not saying it'll be easy."

X liked being itself. But X cried a lot that night, partly because it felt afraid. So X's father held X tight, and cuddled it, and couldn't help crying a little, too. And X's mother cheered them both up by reading an Xciting story about an enchanted prince called Sleeping Handsome, who woke up when Princess Charming kissed him.

The next morning, they all felt much better, and little X went back to school with a brave smile and a clean pair of red-and-white checked overalls.

There was a seven-letter-word spelling bee in class that day. And a seven-lap boys' relay race in the gym. And a seven-layer-cake baking contest in the girls' kitchen corner. X won the spelling bee. X also won the relay race. And X almost won the baking contest, except it forgot to light the oven. Which only proves that nobody's perfect.

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Other Children noticed something else, too. He said: "Winning or losing doesn't seem to count to X. X seems to have fun being good at boys' skills *and* girls' skills."

"Come to think of it," said another one of the Other Children, "maybe X is having twice as much fun as we are!"

So after school that day, the girl who beat X at the baking contest gave X a big slice of her prizewinning cake. And the boy X beat in the relay race asked X to race him home.

From then on, some really funny things began to happen. Susie, who sat next to X in class, suddenly refused to wear pink dresses to school any more. She insisted on wearing red-and-white checked overalls—just like X's. Overalls, she told her parents, were much better for climbing monkey bars.

Then Jim, the class football nut, started wheeling his little sister's doll carriage around the football field. He'd put on his entire football uniform, except for the helmet. Then he'd put the helmet *in* the carriage, lovingly tucked under an old set of shoulder pads. Then

he'd start jogging around the field, pushing the carriage and singing "Rock-a-bye Baby" to his football helmet. He told his family that X did the same thing, so it must be okay. After all, X was now the team's star quarterback.

Susie's parents were horrified by her behavior, and Jim's parents were worried sick about his. But the worst came when the twins, Joe and Peggy, decided to share everything with each other. Peggy used Joe's hockey skates, and his microscope, and took half his newspaper route. Joe used Peggy's needlepoint kit, and her cookbooks, and took two of her three baby-sitting jobs. Peggy started running the lawn mower, and Joe started running the vacuum cleaner.

Their parents weren't one bit pleased with Peggy's wonderful biology experiments, or with Joe's terrific needlepoint pillows. They didn't care that Peggy mowed the lawn better, and that Joe vacuumed the carpet better. In fact, they

were furious. It's all that little X's fault, they agreed. Just because X doesn't know what it is, or what it's supposed to be, it wants to get everybody *else* mixed up, too!

Peggy and Joe were forbidden to play with X any more. So was Susie, and then Jim, and then *all* the Other Children. But it was too late; the Other Children stayed mixed up and happy and free, and refused to go back to the way they'd been before X.

Finally, Joe and Peggy's parents decided to call an emergency meeting of the school's Parents' Association, to discuss "The X Problem." They sent a report to the principal stating that X was a "disruptive influence." They demanded immediate action. The Joneses, they said, should be *forced* to tell whether X was a boy or a girl. And then X should be *forced* to behave like whichever it was. If the Joneses refused to tell, the Parents' Association said, then X must take an Xamination. The school psychiatrist must Xamine it physically and mentally, and issue a full report. If X's test showed it was a boy, it would have to obey all the boys' rules. If it proved to be a girl, X would have to obey all the girls' rules.

And if X turned out to be some kind of mixed-up misfit, then X should be Xpelled from the school. Immediately!

The principal was very upset. Disruptive influence? Mixed-up misfit? But X was an Xcellent student. All the teachers said it was a delight to have X in their classes. X was president of the student council. X had won first prize in the talent show, and second prize in the art show, and honorable mention in the science fair, and six athletic events on field day, including the potato race.

Nevertheless, insisted the Parents' Association, X is a Problem Child. X is the Biggest Problem Child we have ever seen!

So the principal reluctantly notified X's parents that numerous complaints about X's behavior had come to the school's attention. And that after the psychiatrist's Xamination, the school would decide what to do about X.

The Joneses (*continued on page 106*)

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reported this at once to the scientists, who referred them to page 85,759 of the *Instruction Manual*. "Sooner or later," it said, "X will have to be Xamined by a psychiatrist. This may be the only way any of us will know for sure whether X is mixed up—or whether everyone else is."

The night before X was to be Xamined, the Joneses tried not to let X see how worried they were. "What if—?" Mr. Jones would say. And Ms. Jones would reply, "No use worrying." Then a few minutes later, Ms. Jones would say, "What if—?" and Mr. Jones would reply, "No use worrying."

X just smiled at them both, and hugged them hard and didn't say much of anything. X was thinking, What if—? And then X thought: No use worrying.

At Xactly 9 o'clock the next day, X reported to the school psychiatrist's office. The principal, along with a committee from the Parents' Association, X's teacher, X's classmates, and Ms. and Mr. Jones, waited in the hall outside. Nobody knew the details of the tests X was to be given, but everybody knew they'd be very hard, and that they'd reveal Xactly what everyone wanted to know about X, but were afraid to ask.

It was terribly quiet in the hall. Almost spooky. Once in a while, they would hear a strange noise inside the room. There were buzzes. And a beep or two. And several bells. An occasional light would flash under the door. The Joneses thought it was a white light, but the principal thought it was blue. Two or three children swore it was either yellow or green. And the Parents' Committee missed it completely.

Through it all, you could hear the psychiatrist's low voice, asking hundreds of questions, and X's higher voice, answering hundreds of answers.

The whole thing took so long that everyone knew it must be the most complete Xamination anyone had ever had to take. Poor X, the Joneses thought. Serves X right, the Parents' Committee

thought. I wouldn't like to be in X's overalls right now, the children thought.

At last, the door opened. Everyone crowded around to hear the results. X didn't look any different; in fact, X was smiling. But the psychiatrist looked terrible. He looked as if he was crying! "What happened?" everyone began shouting. Had X done something disgraceful? "I wouldn't be a bit surprised!" muttered Peggy and Joe's parents. "Did X flunk the *whole* test?" cried Susie's parents. "Or just the most important part?" yelled Jim's parents.

"Oh, dear," sighed Mr. Jones.

"Oh, dear," sighed Ms. Jones.

"*Sssh*," ssshed the principal. "The psychiatrist is trying to speak."

Wiping his eyes and clearing his throat, the psychiatrist began, in a hoarse whisper. "In my opinion," he whispered—you could tell he must be very upset—"in my opinion, young X here—"

"Yes? Yes?" shouted a parent impatiently.

"*Sssh*!" ssshed the principal.

"Young *Sssh* here, I mean young X," said the doctor, frowning, "is just about—"

"Just about *what*? Let's have it!" shouted another parent.

". . . just about the *least* mixed-up child I've ever Xamined!" said the psychiatrist.

"Yay for X!" yelled one of the children. And then the others began yelling, too. Clapping and cheering and jumping up and down.

"*SSSH*!" SSShed the principal, but nobody did.

The Parents' Committee was angry and bewildered. How *could* X have passed the whole Xamination? Didn't X have an *identity* problem? Wasn't X mixed up at *all*? Wasn't X *any* kind of a misfit? How could it *not* be, when it didn't even *know* what it was? And why was the psychiatrist crying?

Actually, he had stopped crying and was smiling politely through his tears. "Don't you see?" he said. "I'm crying because it's wonderful! X has absolutely no identity problem! X isn't one bit

mixed up! As for being a misfit—ridiculous! X knows perfectly well what it is! Don't you, X?" The doctor winked. X winked back.

"But what *is* X?" shrieked Peggy and Joe's parents. "We still want to know what it is!"

"Ah, yes," said the doctor, winking again. "Well, don't worry. You'll all know one of these days. And you won't need me to tell you."

"What? What does he mean?" some of the parents grumbled suspiciously.

Susie and Peggy and Joe all answered at once. "He means that by the time X's sex matters, it won't be a secret any more!"

With that, the doctor began to push through the crowd toward X's parents. "How do you do," he said, somewhat stiffly. And then he reached out to hug them both. "If I ever have an X of my own," he whispered, "I sure hope you'll lend me your instruction manual."

Needless to say, the Joneses were very happy. The Project Baby X scientists were rather pleased, too. So were Susie, Jim, Peggy, Joe, and all the Other Children. The Parents' Association wasn't, but they had promised to accept the psychiatrist's report, and not make any more trouble. They even invited Ms. and Mr. Jones to become honorary members, which they did.

Later that day, all X's friends put on their red-and-white checked overalls and went over to see X. They found X in the back yard, playing with a very tiny baby that none of them had ever seen before. The baby was wearing very tiny red-and-white checked overalls.

"How do you like our new baby?" X asked the Other Children proudly.

"It's got cute dimples," said Jim.

"It's got husky biceps, too," said Susie.

"What kind of baby is it?" asked Joe and Peggy.

X frowned at them. "Can't you tell?" Then X broke into a big, mischievous grin. "It's a Y!"

Lois Gould has written two novels, "*Such Good Friends*" and "*Necessary Objects*" (Random House).

By Geraldine L. Wilson

How to Buy Children's Toys That Reflect Your Values

Toys are more than just playthings—they're reflections of adult values. That's why we need to look beyond fun and games when shopping

Christmas and Kwanza have always been special for children. That's why December brings the busiest shopping season and the toy manufacturers' heyday. If you're shopping for children's toys this year, you may be asking yourself: Why do I want to buy this for that child? Is it because I wanted this for myself when I was a youngster? Is it because Bobby saw it on TV and begged me to buy it? Is it because it's *cute*? *cheap*? Or *hip*?

Toys are not simply "cute" or "not cute." They tell us plenty about ourselves as adults and about the values of the society we live in. They can play an important role in shaping children's perceptions; they can contribute to or distort children's understanding of reality.

Whatever reasons prompt you to buy toys, you'll want your choices to be a positive experience for children you care about. That's why it's best to do some thinking ahead of time; you may need to clarify your values or come to terms with your attachment to the kinds of toys you used to play with, but in the long run, it will be much better for the child you're shopping for if you establish a few buying guidelines before you step into that toy or department store.

WHAT IS A GOOD TOY?

Generally speaking, a "good" toy is one

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that delights the child, inspires his or her imagination in constructive ways and helps the child to feel good about himself or herself and feel positive toward others. As a concerned shopper, you may also want to adopt the philosophy that toys ought to embody values that are humane, antiracist, antisexist and cooperative, and that encourage or reinforce justice and concern for others. Good toys and games are sturdy, attractive and well made. Toys that can be used to make or create things are fine selections, especially those that can be taken apart and remade into something else. Some parents put a premium on toys that are considered "educational," but if you expect a child to look forward to playing with a toy, it will have to be *fun*.

To help establish criteria to shop by, you may want to consider the following questions (some of which are recommended by the Public Action Coalition on Toys, in New York City):

Is the toy appropriate for the child's age, interest, motor abilities and activity level? Children may become frustrated at toys or games they cannot master physically or mentally. If a toy is beneath their skills, however, they'll probably lose interest.

Does the toy spark or limit the child's imagination or interest in playing with it? Toys that are packaged to suggest only one sex role can limit the child's aspirations or goals—or even your willingness to buy them. For example, when you see a doll

packaged with pictures of girls on the box, you may be reluctant to buy or suggest it for a boy to play with; he, in turn, will be denied the opportunity to nurture, to play out the adult role of father, nurse or teacher. Similarly, if packages of construction kits, science or chemistry sets, trucks and ambulances show only pictures of boys, girls may feel inhibited from playing with these toys and may miss developing the sense of mastery, competence and precision that playing with these toys can bring. Toys can be limiting in other ways too: if a toy is so automated that it has only one function and leaves the child out, he or she will probably get bored quickly.

Does the toy encourage creativity, problem solving and/or cooperation with others? If it does, then so much the better. Is the toy too expensive? This is a relative but important consideration, since toys have been known to become a battleground of guilt and annoyance between parents and children—especially when money is scarce. Poorly made toys are easily broken in the course of normal play, and it's not fair to punish the child for the sins of the manufacturer or those of a careless shopper. Here's another important consideration: Is the toy safe? (See box on page 68.)

BLACK SELF-CONCEPT

The way our children see themselves now is essential: those who learn to see themselves as important, valued people will function more productively as adults. If you're going to be thorough about evaluating the way you choose toys, racial issues will have to be considered. Unless you constantly reinforce the positive aspects of Black people and Black life, that little Black child who sees only white children and white adults in the illustrations of game packages, coloring books, puzzles and puppets can be hurt by being denied role models necessary to the development of a strong racial and cultural sense of self.

If you want to provide reinforcement and support in the critical area of Black self-esteem, try to stretch your imagination. Take the time to look for gifts that involve children in some of the energy and spirit of Black life, that spotlight people who are models of accomplishment or that provide cultural or historical information. For this purpose, musical instruments, records of older or legendary musicians, books and posters make great gifts. So do tickets to a Black play or a Black museum. ▶

HOW TO BUY CHILDREN'S TOYS

◆CHOOSING DOLLS

Since it is not unusual for children to develop deep affection, even allegiance, to dolls, race should be considered when selecting dolls as well. If you are trying to teach the boys and girls you know to feel proud of people with short or kinky hair and brown, olive or tan skin, then buying white dolls with long, straight hair may be in contradiction to your goals.

Perhaps social scientists sensed such contradictions, for several racial-attitude studies were conducted in the forties and fifties by Drs. Kenneth and Mamie Clark, Drs. Helen Trager and Marian Yarrow and Dr. M. E. Goodman. The studies used photographs, dolls, crayons and other materials to determine how Black and white children saw and accepted themselves and one another. The Black children's responses revealed ambivalence, confusion and, often, rejection of themselves as Black children.

When shopping for a child, you may also want to consider the sexism and classism that are conveyed through those adult dolls that stress having designer wardrobes, dating, being "sexy" and being popular. Probably the ultimate in sexism and classism is this year's lineup of dolls named after famous designers. They may prepare children to be avid fashion consumers, but they're hardly about encouraging valuable children's play.

There are several companies that are putting out attractive Black dolls. Effanbee dolls are particularly nice, with cuddly cloth bodies and fleshlike sturdy rubber hands, feet and heads. Gerber (of baby food fame) also has a pleasant Black baby doll. The famous Sasha dolls are fashioned after a seven-year-old girl. Sasha dolls come in a range of skin tones—dark brown, brown, yellow, and white-flesh colored; and they have great clothes—walking shoes, backpacks, skirts, ponchos and jeans. Don't forget to look for a Shindana doll; bravo to this Black manufacturer for its line of Black, Native American, Asian and Latino dolls.

◆ACTION AND WAR TOYS

Practically all children like action toys that move, roll or fly. That's why it's important for you to consider action toys for *both* girls and boys, though just what type of action you wish to encourage should be an important consideration. Generally, trucks, trains, planes, ambulances and construction vehicles make great playthings for children of both sexes.

Many parents have differing opinions about weapons and war games for children. Some who believe in the immediate threat of war (or even the long-term threat) might say, "War games will put steel in the spines of youngsters; they will get children ready to fight in the event of war." There are also those who believe that providing war games and toys helps create a climate in which war is an "acceptable alternative." Still other parents are more uncomfortable with the political and historical references made by many war toys and games sold in America. A child who shoots toy guns at imaginary Indians, these parents say, probably doesn't see killing Indians as particularly serious, and has not been educated about this abominable episode in American history. All of these positions should be taken into account if you're considering buying toy weapons or war games. You should also make sure you know the parents' stand on this issue if you're shopping for someone else's child.

Try to think of toys as more than just playthings for growing children—they can be expressions of cultural values and can help a child learn how to reason and act in the world. If you shop with this point of view in mind, your choices are more likely to be wise ones. And remember, toys should enhance and extend play. After all, it is *play*—vigorous and imaginative play—that is critical to the healthy development of a child.

◆WHERE TO SHOP

• Try pawn and thrift shops, especially for gifts like watches, calculators, binoculars, radios, record players, old typewriters, musical instruments, cameras and so forth.

• Museums have great gift shops. Sometimes they carry items from the cultures of Asian, Native American, African and Black American peoples. If you don't see any displayed, ask. Natural history, science and technology museums have books, games and kits that are full of information.

Here is an abbreviated list of toy manufacturers and stores that make or sell toys you and your child can appreciate.

Effanbee Doll Corp.
200 Fifth Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10011
(212) 675-5650/691-7210

Shindana Doll Company
6107 South Central Ave.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90001
(213) 231-9387

Folkways Records and Service Corps.
(accepts mail orders)
43 West 61st St.
New York, N.Y. 10023
(212) 586-7260

Ask Folkways personnel about their freedom-song albums or records with African music and stories, Caribbean calypso, steel-band music and games and songs from the rural South and city streets.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation
c/o CCRC
Box 271
Nyack, N.Y. 10960-0271
(914) 358-4601

The Fellowship of Reconciliation has a listing (for \$6.95) of games that are alternatives to games of war and competition.

Pennywhistle Toys, Inc.
(accepts mail orders)
1281 Madison Ave.
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Questioning Our Behavior When Working With Young Children



The First Three Years: Building an Important Base

As a specialist in the development and care of children from birth to three, I come to the question of nonsexist childrearing with an additional perspective. One of the reasons that I find working with parents and very young children important, is that it seems to me that the first three years of life are a time when people set up many of the expectations and beliefs they will have about themselves for the rest of their lives. The way we as caregivers and as parents interact with children during this time, the opportunities we provide for them, the way we handle ourselves are all part of building a growing sense of self for a young child.

In the first three years, children are beginning to learn how the world works and where they fit into it. They are developing skills and interests. Jean Piaget has discussed the ways in which we are drawn to explore further those objects and activities we already have some experience with. That is, those things which we have already engaged sufficiently to be able to experience some level of pleasure, competence, and satisfaction are the things we will pursue. Even as adults we know it is always the first foothold that is the hardest to get—from playing squash to embroidery to learning a new language. And so it is with children. The child who has had supported experiences with say, exploring the space around her or him, and the relationships of objects and people within

that space, is more likely to feel comfortable and competent with that sphere. She or he is more likely to go on exploring and using it and seeking out activities which incorporate a certain level of competence in spatial relations, which can later include geometry, block building, and gymnastics.

The child's basic self-image is also created at this time. First, there is the sense of whether or not the world is a trustworthy and listening place that is responsive to her or his most basic needs—hunger, comfort, warmth, and so forth. At the same time, this meeting of the child's needs gives the baby a message that she or he is a valued and valuable person.

Second, during this time the issue of personal effectiveness comes into play. When the baby or toddler communicates needs or desires, or later on expresses ideas, are these communications at least *acknowledged*? Do the important adults pick up on the cues of the infant or miss them altogether? Is there the experience for the young child of being part of a give and take dialogue or simply of being lectured at?

When I approach the issue of nonsexist childrearing in the first three years of life, it is within this context: that *all* children need and deserve the care and opportunities which will respond to their particular needs, and which will help them to develop into healthy adults. In one sense

it is this simple—we are talking about a mental health issue—a strong, clear, and positive self-image, the ability to function effectively, and the ability to derive satisfaction from one's experiences with the world.

There are many parallels between the role of a good teacher and those who work in the mental health field. In addition to working on skills with babies and toddlers and providing them with specific pieces of information, much of a teacher's work lies in the domain of mental health support. Like the mental health professional, a good caregiver addresses the child and her or his needs as an integrated, multifaceted human being. The goal of much educational work should be the support of a child's self-esteem and sense of competence. The teacher helps the child to identify feelings; develop social, physical, and cognitive skills; and to further clarify, understand, and enhance self-image. Both the mental health professional and the good teacher takes each child where she or he is, and recognizes the uniqueness of each individual. Both have as a goal the integration of the many facets of the child's development. Both see the child's future development as grounded in the past and the present, and both seek to work reconstructively where necessary to insure maximal development.

A good teacher then, seeks to provide young children with the learning experiences which will help children to develop to the best of their individual abilities. The desired result would be a well-rounded person whose choices are made from positive desire rather than unconscious restrictions, and whose life is a response to innate individual differences in temperament, skill, and predilection rather than circumstantial limitations.

The Beginnings of Sex-Role Stereotyping

I had the rare opportunity to read every single interview of a caregiver, director, or parent, and every observation done by the trainers of the Project BE team. In the interviews one thing stood out. The most common response that we received to our interview questions was that most people feel sex-role stereotyping does not begin until nursery school. In each center we visited, the vast majority of those interviewed said that they interacted with female and male babies in exactly the same way, and had never seen anyone else in the center discriminate in their behaviors. They really could not imagine what sex-role stereotyping could mean in adult-child interactions in the first three years.

Studies show us that there are no substantiated innate gender differences at birth, but some beginning differences in behavior at the preschool level. What this means is that something important is happening in the first three years of life, something that begins to type children in their behaviors and interactions with the world. This "something" is the beginning of a spiraling trend toward stereotyping throughout life.

The current research literature on adult-child interaction concludes that adults have different ways of handling girls and boys. Girls receive the message that they are expected to respond to others' wishes instead of their own, and adult handling of baby girls may lead to the beginning of a sense of personal ineffectiveness. From

the start, boys on the other hand, receive a lot more general stimulation, a lot more support for their growing autonomy, and a lot more physical freedom, to name only a few differences.

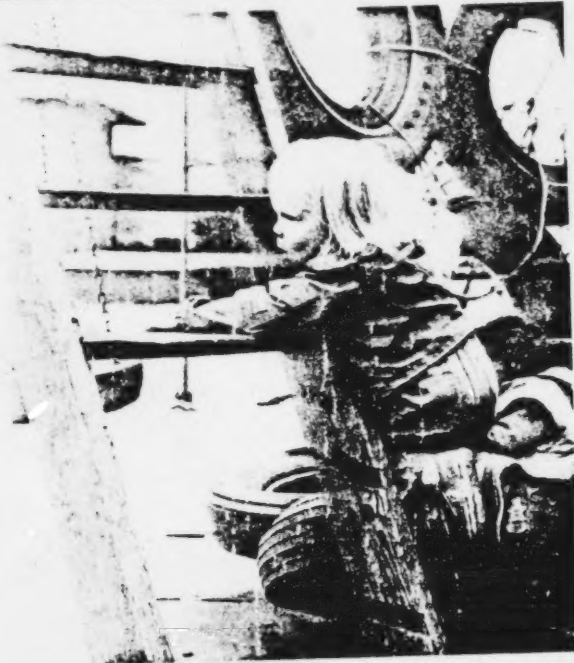
One could question whether or not adults respond to innate biological differences in girls and boys and propose that each gender elicits differential behaviors on the part of the adults. Other research answers this by showing us that adults interpret babies' attributes, communications, and interests based on gender, even when objective measurement of these areas shows no difference between girls and boys. We can only suppose that as a result of these differing interpretations, adults would treat female and male infants differently, and the result would be different growth experiences for each.

Hypotheses for Examining Interactions with Young Children

As I read through the more than 70 observations of children and adults in day-care settings recorded by Project BE team members, some interesting patterns presented themselves. Often the patterns turned up in a number of different forms in several observations. Sometimes though, they were individual incidents that fit into my own observations and past experience working with very young children and adults. Research already has identified the depth of the differential interactions between adults and girl and boy babies. While ours was not a research study, there were enough observations to raise some serious questions and to spark some hypotheses. These hypotheses have not been validated scientifically, but I think that they are interesting questions all the same, and good ones for using to examine our own behavior with young children. Those of us who work with children under three may find it helpful to use these hypotheses as questions to ask ourselves about our own behavior. Sometimes just asking the question turns on the light enough to help us identify behavior we might not have been at all aware of. I'd like to share a few of them to provide a taste of some of the things we at Project BE are wondering about.

Are adults more likely to miss the cues or misunderstand the communications of preverbal girls than preverbal boys? That is, if a boy expresses an interest in an activity or object, are the caregivers more likely to pick up on it?

One example of this was an observation of Susan, a 12-month-old girl in a day-care center. Throughout a long observation, this girl was struggling with a 15-month-old boy who repeatedly took her bottle away. To the outside observer, it was absolutely clear that Susan really wanted her bottle. She crawled after it; she stopped her play to look longingly after it; she cried for it. When she finally did retrieve the bottle, the older child tried to take it away from her again. Susan cried and held it out of his reach. Though the caregivers were almost continually interacting with this girl, talking to her, picking her up, changing her diaper, and making her dance with them, they never intervened to help her retrieve her bottle. Indeed, it appeared as if they did not notice this poignant struggle. At the end of the observation time, one of the



caregivers walked over to Susan who had finally reclaimed her bottle for the third time, and pulled it away from her saying, "Lunch time! It's time to eat. You don't need a bottle now." The baby girl's clear needs and desires were completely lost or ignored. In almost all of our other observations, if a boy showed even the most subtle interest in an object or activity, the caregiver picked up on it and responded.

Are girls complimented on appearance and boys on achievement? And further, are girls' achievements turned into appearance?

While Susan was struggling to retrieve her bottle, and the caregivers were interacting with her, she was encouraged to try walking. When her lace-covered rubber pants showed, the caregiver said, "Oh pretty!" When Susan began to practice her walking the caregiver said, "Don't you look pretty!" In a similar case, it is highly unlikely that a boy baby practicing walking would be told, "Don't you look pretty!" It is much more likely that he would be told, "Look how big you are!" or "What a good walker!" or simply cheered on. Why is it that the girl's initial mastery of an important achievement is turned into another occasion to be an attraction?

Do caregivers view on-looking girls as participants?

We observed that if a girl was hanging around the edge of a block corner watching a few boys play, this was sufficient for the caregiver, and the child was not drawn into the action. In an identical case, a boy would be encouraged to try his hand at block building too. This did not seem to apply exclusively to sex-typed activities such as block building, since girls who were simply watching other activities, such as fine motor tasks, seemed to be perceived by the caregivers as sufficiently participating in the action.

Is the exploratory wandering of toddler girls more frequently interrupted than that of boys?

The exploratory wandering of toddlers is one of the important ways that they gather information about the

world and form questions and hypotheses. We watched as girls' interests and pursuits were put second place to caregivers' agendas (e.g. diapering, or even simply the caregiver wanting to talk to the baby), while caregivers seemed to bend their own schedules and ideas more frequently to the explorations of toddler boys.

Do girls get more verbal reflections about their feelings while boys are distracted from them?

We noted that boys were frequently distracted from their feelings, while girls received a lot of verbal reflection and identification of feelings from caregivers. A crying girl was likely to be told, "I know you're sad that mommy has gone away, but it's going to be alright," while a boy was told, "Look! Here's the red truck!"

Do caregivers work harder with girls to socialize them and help them to be more responsible than they do with boys?

We saw that caregivers do indeed make responsibility a more important part of girls' experiences. In one observation, three two-year-old boys and a fourteen-month-old girl were playing with bristle blocks. When the caregiver announced, "Clean up time!" she encouraged the girl to help her put all the blocks back into the box by making a game out of it. All three boys went over to sit down on a bench to wait to have their shoes put on. No one encouraged them to participate or seemed to note the inequity of the situation.

□ □ □

These are a few examples of the kinds of things we have been seeing during our early visits to day-care centers. Since much of learning depends on the chance for a child to engage the environment actively and freely, the restrictions we impose upon children in the kind, amount, and style of interacting with the world have to affect how they view themselves. Self-image is not created from one or two or even twenty important events in one's life. The messages of behavior repeated over and over again in thousands of different forms and combinations train a child more effectively than individual occurrences or simple verbalizations of the "correct" attitude.

The way that we relate to children, the way we fantasize about their futures, the way we touch them, talk to them, teach them, and ignore them, all fall into a pattern which reflects our own sex-role socialization. And it is a pattern which we shall continue to pass on to the many children we care for unless we are able to become aware of the unconscious assumptions we make and the way these assumptions are translated into action. It is only then that we can begin to see individual children as unique beings with specific needs, responses, and skills, not simply as individual examples of a type. Then we can help them to grow into competent, loving adults, with the ability to form healthy human relationships, find satisfaction in some kind of work, and feel basically good about themselves. That, after all, is really a major goal of all education, whether it is for a one year old or an adult.

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Creating a Child Care Environment for Infants and Toddlers

The fifteen month old toddled to the low shelf. Grasping a squeeze-toy in her left hand, she grabbed a small car with the right. Spotting a foam ball, she paused for a moment; then, stuffing part of the squeeze-toy into her mouth, clasped the ball with her free hand and charged off to something else. Research shows that children learn best when they initiate the learning themselves. The child above created and solved her own

problem; interesting, accessible toys made this possible.

Because young children change so rapidly, caregivers are constantly tailoring the environment of the center to fit the needs of the growing children. Knowing individual children enables the caregivers to supply materials, spaces, and responses that are appropriate to each of them. To keep pace with the children's growth, caregivers rotate toys, making an adequate number of intriguing items available without overwhelming the children with too many choices. Toys not currently in use are stored to be brought out to replace ones that children no longer choose. Furniture is moved according to children's apparent need for enclosures or open spaces.

Children learn from their environment as it changes to fit them. The caregiver expresses appreciation of the child's growth by knowing when to offer the child a place at the table in lieu of the high chair. The child often senses having reached a landmark. Caregivers who are sensitive to children's growth contribute to their

self-esteem.

The materials at the center pose a range of problems for the children to solve. Children discover hard surfaces and contrast them with soft ones. They use materials like puzzles that have a single solution, and others like play dough with which a child can both create the problem and the answer to it. Different toys react differently to the child's touch, making a noise, flopping over, changing shape. As children explore the center, they learn about the physical properties of the world.

They also learn about other people. Dressing up, play cooking, and rocking a doll all give the young child a chance to experiment with adult roles and learn about them. When the dress-up area and all other parts of the center are available to all children, they have equal opportunities to learn about themselves and the world around them.

The organization of the space and the quantity of toys available contributes to the child's sense of self in relation to others. An enclosed space can feel secure or claustrophobic. Too many toys can be overwhelming; not enough can lead to fights among the children. In arranging the environment, caregivers strive for the right balance.

Parents play an important role in the life of an infant-toddler program. The physical set-up can contribute to their feeling comfortable at the center. When they do, they transmit a sense of security to their children. Places for written communication and opportunities and space for oral communication let the parents know what their children are doing at the center. Parents gain a sense of belonging to the center when they feel they know their way about it. Caregivers help them by labeling and by showing them around. Materials parents need, markers for labeling, paper to write caregivers a note, extra crackers for the journey home, can be available and accessible to parents.

Observations in child-care centers show that even within carefully planned environments, children



often use areas and materials in a sex-stereotyped way. As caregivers analyze the environment, they can observe which children need encouragement to explore activities in new, nonstereotypic ways. They can also evaluate how they themselves use the environment with children. Do they give subtle cues that reinforce sex stereotyping?

It is important that all children have the opportunity to develop in a variety of ways. Since each aspect of

the program's environment encourages growth in specific areas, children miss opportunities for development by avoiding or being discouraged from any aspect.

The accompanying chart shows typical aspects of an infant-toddler program, how children use the materials and areas, and what they learn by doing so. Clearly, all children would benefit from active use of all these areas. However, some of these areas and materials tend to

be used mostly by children of one sex. The last column of the chart has been left blank for use as an informal observation tool with girls and boys in your center. Caregivers can use a thoughtfully designed infant-toddler environment to help all children develop skills by encouraging and redirecting children's play in non-stereotypic ways.

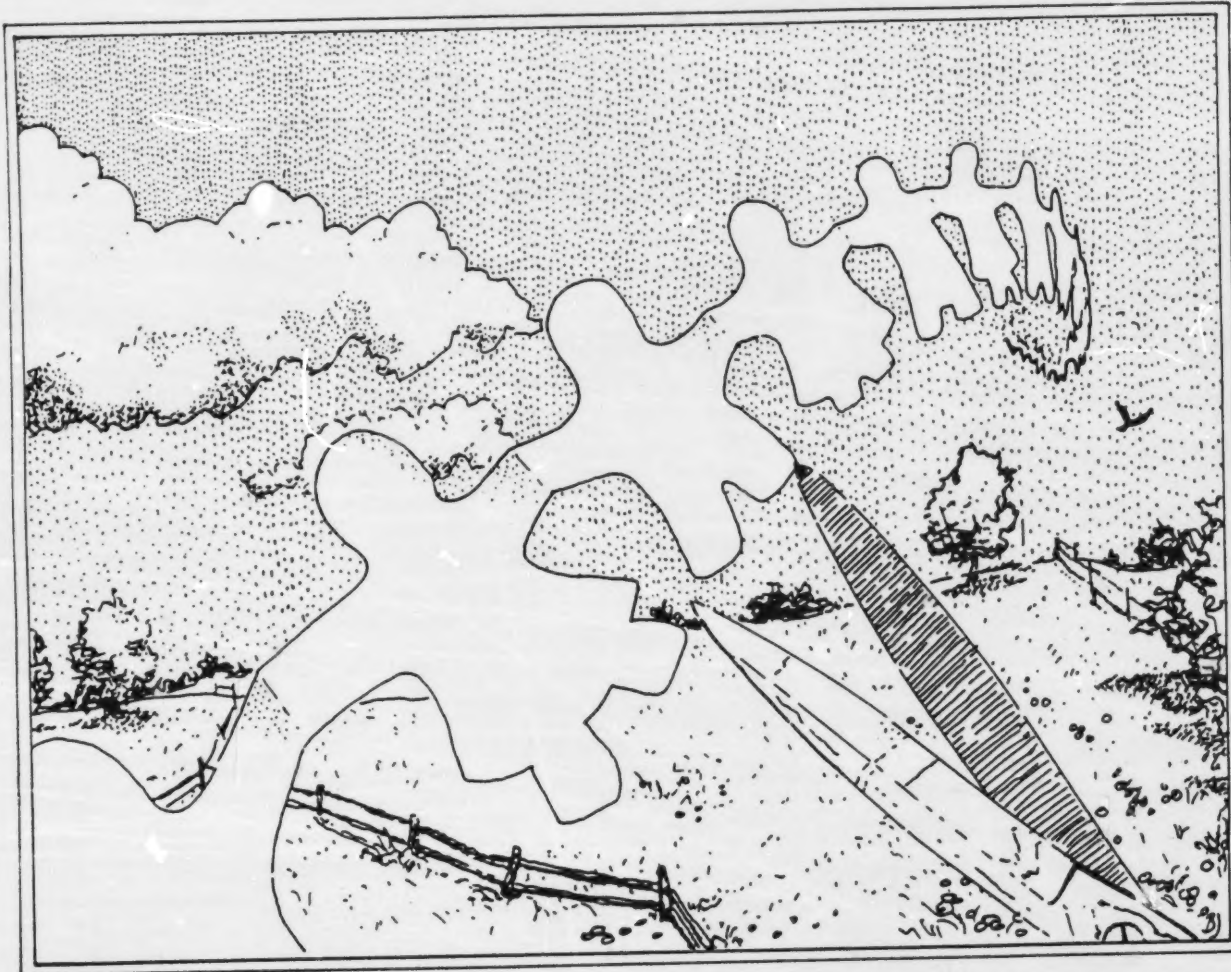
RACHEL THEILHEIMER
Director, Union Theological
Seminary Day Care Center

TYPICAL ASPECTS OF AN INFANT-TODDLER CHILD-CARE ENVIRONMENT			WHO IS USING THESE MATERIALS IN YOUR CHILD-CARE ENVIRONMENT?	
MATERIALS AND AREAS	ACTIVITIES	SKILLS DEVELOPED	GIRLS	BOYS
Low shelves for toys	explore without adult help and initiate their own learning	develops independence and a sense of autonomy		
Child-size tables and chairs	climb in and out of chairs without help (the furniture is just their size)	develops independence and autonomy; affirms children's growth		
Some adult-size furniture	see their parents use it in comfort; climb in and out of it as they would at home	communicates that parents are part of the center; creates homelike atmosphere		
High chairs close to the tables	children in high chairs eat together with the children sitting at tables and chairs	develops a social unit that includes everyone		
Cheerful changing area; more than one potty	talk to each other and to teachers; have fun together	gives good feelings about themselves and their bodies		
Space to close off for sleeping	different children are on different schedules; some sleep while others are awake	recognizes individual differences		
Materials (real and child-size) for dramatic play	practice opening and closing; putting on and taking off; mimic adults	gives opportunities to explore the physical traits of things and to experiment with adult roles		
Blocks and other building materials	stack, knock down, and transport blocks	enables them to explore the physical traits of the material; learn about balance, gravity; helps them acquire sense of competency		
Art materials	begin applying paint and glue randomly and gradually develop their own process	teaches that there is no one right answer; enables them to explore the physical properties of open-ended materials		
Large motor equipment	climb, slide, rock	gives them good feelings about their bodies; develops physical competency		
Pictures on walls of people, food, animals	point to them and talk about them	builds language; develops social skills		

The Cues We Don't Question:

Unintentional Gender Socialization in the Day Care Facility

By Melanie Booth-Butterfield



More than 40 percent of American mothers of preschoolers (children under six) worked outside the home in 1977. This rate is even higher among female heads of household. Considering the decline of the extended family and increasing economic pressures, we have no reason to predict anything but an increase in this percentage in the upcoming years (U.S. Department of Labor, 1977). With more mothers working outside the home during their children's younger years larger numbers of children are spending more hours in day care centers or preschool facilities. Thus, the socializa-

tion impact of teachers and attendants in this field is tremendous. Particularly in the realm of sex role socialization we need to be aware of the subtle messages communicated when we treat boys and girls differently.

A person's gender orientation is well-established by the age of six (Brooks-Gunn and Matthews, 1979; Kohlberg, 1966; Lips and Colwill 1978). This orientation will influence the way they communicate, interact with others and see themselves for the rest of their lives. Recognition of the importance of gender socialization is evidenced (1) by the move to hire more male teachers for younger children, thus providing alternate role models, (2) by the creation of review boards to avoid stereotypic images in books, and

(3) by the generally-accepted prohibition of admonishing, "Big boys don't cry." But there is more.

Eleanor Maccoby and Carol Jacklin, psychologists at Stanford University, conducted an exhaustive review of the research in the field of sex role differences and found almost no consistent differences in ability until early adolescence (Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974). However, any time our pattern of communication is different for girls and boys at any age, we are teaching them that they may have different potentials, weaknesses and appropriate roles due to their sex. Children learn very early who can "get away" with more, who will be disciplined more harshly, and what they are expected to do to gain favor

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with significant others. From our observations in day care centers we concluded that teachers may not be aware of the implications of their communication with the children. These are not glaring errors such as might be seen in a television program, but habits of communication which we might not question and which may have a negative effect. Here are some situations to think about in your work with children.

Independence Training

"Learned helplessness" is a typically feminine trait which may harm the girl in the long run (Dweck, 1973; Dweck, 1976; and Dweck, Goetz, and Strauss, 1980). If the task is perceived as difficult, beyond her current abilities, and she can have someone else do it for her, she doesn't learn to accomplish the task herself and may lower her estimation of her own abilities. This practice is not only culturally condoned, but reinforced and encouraged in many cases.

We observed (and this is supported by broader research as well, Harrison, 1974) that people who ran the day care facilities did more for the girls. This included folding paper for them, reaching things, helping girls with clothing, telling them answers and on and on. They were more likely to only partially aid the boys or show them how to do the task for themselves, rather than simply taking over. Sandra brings you a handle to paste onto a paper basket. You take the paste, handle, and basket and complete the task very quickly. Steve asks for help with the same item and you give him instructions to accomplish the handle-pasting on his own. Little girls might be more likely to come to you to ask you to do it, but who is going to be better able to accomplish the same task the next time it occurs?

Touching

Girls are the recipients of more touching from at least six months of age (Brooks-Gunn and Matthews, 1979; Eakins and Eakins, 1978). This is a great benefit for the girls, but boys

are deprived and may grow up less sensitive to touch, less able to use touch as a channel of communication, and later in life may be hindered in the expression of intimate communication (Goldberg, 1979). We observed that girls were often picked up, kissed, hugged, or stroked just for affection and not necessarily as a reward or in order to get them to do something. Boys were more often lifted in order to see and learn about something, or touched because they did a good job at their activity. Gentle touch is comforting for almost anyone. Why connect it with achievement? The next time you pat a little boy on the back because his picture looks good, try to remember the last time you touched him just because he is a person.

At the other extreme, boys are more likely to receive physical discipline than girls (Bronfenbrenner, 1961; Brooks-Gunn and Matthews, 1979). Girls tend to receive verbal reprimands. Both may be equally effective (or ineffective depending on your view), but I doubt that boys are more deserving of or receptive to physical punishment than girls.

Play Objects

What toys do the children in your facility play with? Do you hand them out or are they given free choice? Is there a girls' box of toys and a boys' box of toys — separate and perhaps unequal? Toys lead to fantasy worlds for children, as well as practice for real life. In fantasies they try on life-styles and think about what they would like to be doing if they only could. Many skills which are utilized in adult life are practiced in play with toys. Building sets may improve spatial abilities, dolls (whether male or female) provide practice in verbal abilities and interpersonal skills, certain games improve hand-eye coordination. If we accept that we want all children to be as competent as they can possibly be in all those areas, then providing tools for their growth is part of our job. Encourage children to play with all the toys, rather than limiting them to race cars which go "vroom" or baby dolls for playing "Mommy."

Rewards and Reinforcements

Consider the behaviors you reward in your group. Do you have different standards for boys and girls? Studies show that often the praise given to girls is related to how they look or the neatness of their work rather than the actual quality with which something is done (Dweck, 1978). You might be saying, "How neat your paper looks, Kathy," as opposed to "You have some very good thoughts there, Kathy." Dweck also found that in the area of negative feedback only 34% of the evaluation for boys was aimed at intellectual inadequacy or appropriateness, while for girls it was 88.9%. For boys a full 45% of their negative evaluations referred to less relevant details such as neatness or failure to follow the given form. In other words, girls are rewarded for complying with rules and being orderly, but not necessarily for their creativity or intellectual ability. If the objective in a task is good appearance, then this is appropriate. But that isn't usually the case. To promote growth when praising a child, remember what you were looking for and reward, reinforce, and offer incentive to expand in that behavior.

In a related area, little girls tend to be protected more from rough activities, challenging tasks or emotional upsets than boys. If your face shows how worried you are that a little girl can climb to the top of the monkey bars, that may be cueing the children very subtly that you don't think she can do it. On the other hand, your tone of voice may show disapproval of a little boy who is fearful of doing the same thing. According to Lenore Weitzman in *Sex Role Socialization* (1979) children grow up to be more confident and competent if they have had "independence training" as a child. Children are encouraged to take initiative and responsibility for themselves, to solve problems alone rather than always relying on others. We tend to let boys try things, perhaps fail, and then try again. We are less likely to do this with girls (Brooks-Gunn and Matthews, 1979; Maccoby, 1963). As a result girls may grow up

with an inordinate fear of failure. With boys we have expectations of their competing and achieving. As a result of these expectations, they may grow up feeling pressured to achieve at high levels and believe themselves a personal failure if they don't (Farrell, 1974; Goldberg, 1979). Is it such a big deal if Tim doesn't want to become a

top baseball player or high-ranking executive?

It seems clear that much damaging communication may take place if the caregivers are not aware of the differential implications of their tone of voice, touch, or facial expression. Simply becoming more aware of how you communicate with others goes a

long way. Check up on yourself. Do you touch Christy more than Christopher? Are you more likely to tie Jenny's shoe for her than Jimmy's for him? And who are you more likely to accept even if they don't like to play kickball?

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Where Have All the Changes Gone?

As mothers of four teen-age children, we remember reading Dr. Spock's *Baby and Child Care* (January 1965 edition, 144th printing) as each alarming rash, fever, tantrum, and nightmare arose. In it we often found comfort and sound advice, but we also found advice presented as scientific fact which added heavily to the guilt we already felt in wanting to pursue a life of our own outside motherhood.

Spock advised mothers not to work during the first years of a child's life unless they absolutely had to; children, we read, may grow up "neglected" and "maladjusted" without the one-to-one loving attention of their mothers. Fathers, we were told, were to be the occasional helpmates of their wives—they might take over the 2 a.m. or Sunday feeding; they were to be the rough and tumble partners of our toddler sons and the male admirers of our daughters' pretty dresses and baked cookies.

In 1982, our yellowing copies of *Baby and Child Care* look and sound as antiquated as the books our mothers read which counseled them to toilet train us by 18 months and to feed us at regular four-hour intervals, regardless of whether we screamed with hunger. In the revised edition

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We reviewed a total of 19 books (*See List*), focusing on those sections that dealt specifically with the years from birth to age three. We asked the following questions:

Is the nuclear family with the mother as primary caregiver portrayed as the norm?

How is the socioeconomic and cultural context of childrearing presented?

Are the negative effects of sex-role stereotyping presented and discussed?

Is infant-toddler group care regarded as a potentially optimal form of child care?

Summary of Findings

Family Structure

- Only three of the nineteen books offer positive examples of family structures other than the nuclear family.

- Only four of the nineteen books advocate shared parenting because of its relationship to nonsexist childrearing.

- Twelve of the nineteen books portray mothers who

A Survey of Childrearing Books for Parents and Caregivers

of *Baby and Child Care* (1976), Spock courageously acknowledges a debt to the women's movement for his understanding of the sexism inherent in views formerly considered scientifically sound.

As members of Project BE began to prepare a series of workshops on nonsexist childrearing, we felt it essential to review the books that parents and caregivers are currently reading. Childrearing literature reflects prevailing attitudes about the family and child care. As such, we wanted to know if the women's movement had affected the thinking of recent writers and early childhood experts other than Dr. Spock, and if it had, in what ways. More specifically, we wanted to discover what views are likely to be shaping parents' and caregivers' attitudes toward their children's sex roles; to see if popular books reflect women's increased participation in the work force and changes in family structure; and to determine what is missing and what needs to be written to supplement the current literature.

The books we selected for review were recommended by directors and caregivers of infant-toddler child-care centers in New York City, by parents of infants and toddlers, and by newly graduated students in the early childhood programs at the Bank Street School of Education. The titles include popular advice books as well as specialized texts currently being used in early childhood education courses. We should point out, however, that there is an overlap between the books in these two categories. A person being trained to be a child-care worker may read many of the books geared to parents and, in turn, may pass these same books along to new parents in their centers.

work outside the home as having negative impact on childrearing.

- Sixteen books advocate the active involvement of fathers in childrearing; fourteen do so only in the context of the nuclear family, implying diminished responsibility for fathers in other family situations.

Sex Roles

- Four of the sixteen books endorse traditional sex-role stereotypes in young children.

- Ten of the books mention new research on sex roles. Of these, seven discuss the negative consequences of sex role stereotyping.

- Only two of the nineteen books reviewed suggest strategies for nonsexist childrearing.

- Only four books discuss the sexuality of infants and toddlers in any depth; one of these makes sexist assumptions about adult and infant sexuality.

Socioeconomic and Cultural Context

- Fifteen of the nineteen books assume a white middle-class socioeconomic and cultural background.

- Only three books provide parents with strategies for explaining and countering racism in the larger society.

- Only two of the books discuss childrearing issues with a disabled child and none of them discuss how to explain disability to nondisabled children.

- Only one of the nineteen books provides a perspective on parenting that acknowledges the responsibilities of the larger community toward children and parents.

Infant-Toddler Group Care

- Fifteen of the nineteen books give little or no

endorsement to group care for infants and toddlers.

- Only one offers a vision of what group care could become in a nonracist and nonsexist society.

The following article details our findings. With a few notable exceptions, we found that sexist assumptions are still alive and well in the current childrearing literature.¹

A case in point is the author's use of language. One could assume, from the majority of childrearing books we reviewed, that the world is populated by an overabundance of male infants. Eleven of the 16 books we read used the male pronoun to refer to all children.² While in many cases, the authors acknowledge that this is neither accurate nor appropriate, they persist in sexist usage. The most illustrative example appears in *Understanding Your Child from Birth to Three* in which the author uses the generic "he" until, in a discussion of children's genitals, the language shifts to "he" or "she." In *A Good Beginning for Babies: Guidelines for Group Care*, the authors footnote their use of "she" for all caregivers, explaining: "For convenience, caregivers are referred to with feminine pronouns. . . . It is hoped and recommended that males be included as caregivers and in mother roles in programs whenever possible." (p. 65) However, the authors have no compunction—or explanation—for their use of the masculine pronoun for all babies.

Is the Nuclear Family with the Mother as Primary Caregiver Portrayed as the Norm?

Mother at Home in the Nuclear Family

T. Berry Brazelton is regarded as one of the leading and most popular early childhood experts today, referred to by many as "the new Dr. Spock." In his first book, *Infants and Mothers* (1969), Brazelton's preference for mothers staying at home as primary caregivers comes through clearly. He points out that, when the infant is six months old, many mothers feel their child is no longer totally dependent upon them. Brazelton cautions that it is "easy for a mother to go overboard in this period and push an infant into too much independence—such as propping bottles, weaning him, leaving him more often, or going back to work." (p. 163)

Brazelton acknowledges that the role of mother may not satisfy all women completely in spite of his "own bias in favor of a woman's most important role as the mother of her small children." (p. 163) His solution? Mothers should "understand the importance of their role, as well as realize its potential in their families." This may help them "see it as a goal that transcends anything they can achieve in their professional life. This is a goal for the future education of women." (italics added) (p. 164)

Brazelton's belief in an ongoing, sustained, one-to-one mother-child union during the earliest years is paramount in his second book as well. In *Toddlers and Parents* (1974; 1980, 6th printing), despite the new nonsexist title, he repeatedly points to the need for mothers to provide full-time care for their infants for at least the first three months—and preferably the first six.

In addition, he provides example after example of mothers and infants, who after a long day together, are relieved and excited to see Daddy come home:

A father's importance to both mother and infant at the end of the day can hardly be overrated . . . Mr. Thompson took over to read to Susan before bed while Mrs. Thompson retreated gratefully to fix their dinner. (pp. 21-23)

While Brazelton acknowledges his "male chauvinism" in this example, his answer to the stereotype of the "tired, familiar mother and the new, exciting father" is not to question the validity of the sex roles, but to assure the mother that her reward "must be in the form of other than superficial satisfactions." It must be in "the job of being an all-important anchor, of being a source of strength which can allow the child his [sic] negativism, his swings in ambivalence, his testing of the environment and of his own ego resources." (p. 118)

An indication that the women's movement has had some effect on experts other than Dr. Spock is shown by the changes evident in Brazelton's most recent book, *On Becoming a Family: The Growth of Attachment* (1981). Brazelton regards the first four months as crucial for both fathers and mothers in developing attachment to their child; he recommends a six-month maternity leave for women and a four-month paternity leave for men (the double standard prevails in spite of his theoretical perspective on the importance of attachment). (p. 191) He also pleads for a "men's movement" that will help fathers to reevaluate their professional and family roles. (p. 187)

Mothers at Work Outside the Home

In the discussion of mothers working outside the home, the middle-class bias and sexist assumptions of the childrearing books become intertwined. Clearly, in the majority of these books (though certainly not in the majority of homes in the United States today) it is better to be able to afford to have one parent stay at home and do full-time child care—and that parent is mother.³ In the composite family profiles in Brazelton's *Toddlers and Parents*, for example, the children of working parents are depicted as withdrawn and hyperactive. They obviously suffer as a result of not being cared for at home.

After describing a harried breakfast scene in one working parent profile, Brazelton comments: "This is a poor start for the day. Not only is it slim pickings for Kara . . . but the parents will feel cheated and guilty all day." (p. 26) But, as it turns out, only Kara's mother really feels guilty; she is torn between her role as mother and the "need to supplement her husband's income." Of course, Kara does suffer as predicted. While her child care situation is calm and peaceful, Brazelton criticizes it for being too much so. The day ends as it begins, in chaos; Kara screams and sobs, her mother feels like a failure, father comes home (of course, mother both brings Kara to and picks her up from day care), and then both mother and Kara "compete" for his attention.

Although the problems Brazelton addresses are real,

they are not the result of mothers working outside the home, but of inadequate support systems for these women. Working parents do experience guilt in leaving their children; they do have difficulties finding quality child care, then juggling child care and work. However, after reading *Toddlers and Parents*, a parent's guilt would only be increased; mothers who must work or choose to do so will find no support here.

In his chapter on "The Working Mother" in *Understanding Your Child from Birth to Three* (1973), Joseph Church begins positively by citing several studies that show that babies or small children in day care do not suffer maternal deprivation. He asserts that mothers and fathers must share in parenting, and he acknowledges the need for societal support for working parents. However, he emphasizes the difficulties of shared parenting with such gusto, that it is hard to imagine that he really believes in it. Witness how he concludes the discussion: "Given present economics, it is probably better for the mother to defer working (or studying) full time at least for the first few years of her child's life." (p. 240)

In a recent book from the Princeton Center for Infancy and Early Development, *The First Twelve Months of Life* by Frank Caplan (1973), women's need and desire to work is acknowledged. However, Caplan assumes that most mothers will experience guilt feelings if they work and advises such women to "consult their pediatrician"—no doubt a male since a woman might empathize with the mother's guilt feelings!

In *Black Childcare: How to Bring Up a Healthy Black Child in America* (1975), Alvin Poussaint and James Comer also advise mothers to remain at home with their children. When mothers do put their children in a day-care center or nursery school, the authors suggest that they do so only two or three mornings a week, thus precluding their use of publicly funded day care.

On the other hand, *The Black Parents Handbook* by Clara McLaughlin (1976) is clearly addressed to the needs of working mothers. The need for good child care is acknowledged, and guidelines for choosing child-care arrangements are given.

Involved Fathers

We found most of the books we reviewed moving toward the acceptance of a new norm—that of involved fathers. In most respects, however, this is not a radical departure from the old norm. The emphasis is still on the nuclear family; only now, fathers are expected to participate more actively in their child's rearing.

Two books in the Harvard Child Development series argue strongly for the involvement of both parents in child care because it is essential for the child's optimal development. In *Mothering* (1977), Rudolph Schaffer presents substantial evidence to lay to rest theories on the negative consequences of maternal separation during the first two-and-one-half years of life. Schaffer argues that once a child begins to form attachments to others at around seven months, she or he is capable of and benefits from numerous attachments—to fathers, caregivers, and

grandparents. Fathers as well as mothers can be excellent "mothers" according to Schaffer; a person's temperament rather than her or his kinship to the child should determine who does the "mothering" in a family. Ideally, he argues, both parents will want to become involved with their child and to develop their nurturing capacities.

Another book in the same series, *Fathers* by Ross Parke (1981), gives even greater support to the involvement of fathers in childrearing. Parke argues for social changes that will allow for more involved fathers—flexitime, paternity leaves, and shared jobs. He also cites research showing the positive effects on children of care by nontraditional fathers—that is, those who either share parenting or who assume the responsibilities of the primary parent. These fathers are particularly likely to encourage their daughters, perhaps in an attempt to compensate for "sexist influences they will experience in the larger society." (p. 109)

While shared parenting is being touted as superior in many childrearing books, it has been left to feminist writers to discuss what shared parenting really means: how parents decide who washes the dirty diapers, warms the formula at 3 a.m., calls the babysitter and pediatrician, and delivers and picks up from child care. Exactly what shared parenting means in the eyes of early childhood experts is unclear. That parenthood is not only an intense emotional and psychological experience, but also hard work and an arena for the exercise of power and conflict is flatly ignored by the "experts."

In arguing for shared parenting, all three books written from a feminist perspective—*Ourselves and Our Children* (1978), *Right from the Start* (1978), and *Growing Up Free* (1980)—do so not only out of concern for the child, but also out of concern for the parents. They recognize and validate a mother's need for work and for interests outside the family and emphasize men's need to share in the work of nurturing, not only because women should not bear this burden alone, but also because this work is profoundly humanizing.

Single Mothers

One ironic consequence of the trend to involve fathers in shared parenting is that women more than ever before are seen as incapable of rearing healthy children alone. The one "alternative" structure discussed at any length in the books reviewed—single parenthood—probably never has had such a bad press.

Only in *Growing Up Free*, *Right from the Start*, and *Ourselves and Our Children* is single parenthood viewed positively; otherwise there is an ostrich-like refusal to see the realities of family structure today and to discuss child-rearing within this changed context.⁴ Take, for example, the following quotations from Joseph Church: "I do believe . . . that a child needs at least two parents of different sexes. This belief would imply that those who want children should find some congenial form of marriage." (p. 146); and from the revised Dr. Spock: "It is preferable for children to live with two parents . . . if the parents love and respect each other." (p. 41)

Many of the books cite studies showing the negative consequences of mothers raising children alone. According to Parke, divorced mothers read less to their children, spend less time playing with them and often do not even eat with them. (p. 72) In *Understanding Your Children from Birth to Three*, Church states, "It is worth repeating that to have no father or an inadequate father is a most unfortunate circumstance for boys and girls alike. Recent findings [show that] father-deprived girls live lifetimes of either promiscuity or withdrawal from males." (p. 151) Such evidence is questionable at best; it attributes a whole range of social problems to one cause—single mothers. Had other factors been taken into consideration—for example, a family's material circumstances, educational background, and community and family support—the mother's marital status might have been found to be irrelevant. The real problem often seems to be not the lack of a male, but the lack of a male income.⁵

In *Becoming a Family*, Brazelton gives a more positive portrait of a single mother—although hardly a typical one. She is a highly successful career woman with an interesting, well-paying job who wanted to have a child on her own. Her problems have nothing to do with those of most single parents—juggling survival and the needs of children—her problems are purely psychological. Without another parent to test the relationship, Brazelton cautions, she may have difficulty in separating from her son, in interpreting the cues of his growing independence. Therefore, Brazelton suggests that she follow his advice in this matter of when to separate—thus the *deus ex machina* for the single mother, a surrogate male parent, has been found.

Are the Negative Effects of Sex-Role Stereotyping Presented and Discussed?

Hurrah for Sex Roles!

Reading some of the books we reviewed was like taking a graduate course on how to sex-role stereotype your children. Ira Gordon's *Baby Learning Through Baby Play* (1970) is a classic of unconscious and conscious sexism. While Gordon does not differentiate intentionally between the activities that he recommends for infant girls and boys, his illustrations tell quite another story. Babies engaged in block play, in "scouting around" their environment, in riding on their father's backs, or in working a machine such as a tape recorder are invariably boys. Girl babies—distinctly portrayed with curls and dresses—are more often playing with dolls, working in the kitchen, and helping their mother with household chores. When a boy and girl are juxtaposed in the kitchen, the boy is shown independently unpacking groceries, while the little girl is assisted by her mother in placing a bottle in the refrigerator. (pp. 58-59) Gordon recommends that an excellent activity for fathers to engage in with their infants is "knock the bunny off—an action game for father and child." This game is recommended for fathers because of "the amount of exertion involved." (p. 62) Gordon points out that "Boys

Childrearing Books Reviewed

The Boston Women's Health Book Collective. *Ourselves and Our Children: A Book by and for Parents*. New York: Random House, 1978.

Brazelton, T. Berry. *Infants and Mothers: Differences in Development*. New York: Delta Book/Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1969.

Brazelton, T. Berry. *Toddlers and Parents: A Declaration of Independence*. New York: Dell Publishing Center, 1974; 1980, 6th printing.

Brazelton, T. Berry. *On Becoming a Family: The Growth of Attachment*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1981.

Caplan, Frank. *The First Twelve Months of Life*. New York: Gosset and Dunlap, 1973.

Church, Joseph. *Understanding Your Child from Birth to Three*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1973.

Comer, James P. and Poussaint, Alvin F. *Black Child Care: How to Bring Up a Healthy Black Child in America*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975.

Fowler, William. *Infant and Child Care: A Guide to Education in Group Settings*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1980.

Gordon, Ira J. *Baby Learning Through Baby Play: A Parent's Guide to the First Two Years*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970.

Greenberg, Selma. *Right from the Start: A Guide to Nonsexist Childrearing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1978.

Harrison-Ross, Phyllis and Wyden, Barbara. *The Black Child: A Parent's Guide*. New York: Peter H. Wyden, Inc., 1973.

McCall, Robert. *Infants: The New Knowledge About the Years from Birth to Three*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.

McLaughlin, Clara J. *The Black Parents Handbook: A Guide to the Facts of Pregnancy, Birth and Child Care*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1976.

Parke, Ross. D. *Fathers*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981.

Pogrebin, Letty Cottin. *Growing Up Free: Raising Your Child in the 80's*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1980.

Schaffer, Rudolph. *Mothering*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977.

Spock, Benjamin. *Baby and Child Care*. New York: Pocket Books, 1976.

Stone, Joseph L. and Church, Joseph. *Childhood and Adolescence: A Psychology of the Growing Person*. New York: Random House, 1979, 4th edition.

Willis, Anne and Ricciuti, Henry. *A Good Beginning for Babies: Guidelines for Group Care*. Cornell University. Ithaca, N.Y.: N.D.

especially need active play with their fathers or with older brothers or other men . . . Although this looks purely physical, it contributes to ideas about being a boy." (p. 112)

While Brazelton acknowledges that sex roles may be learned rather than innate, he does not acknowledge that they are limiting in any way for children or adults. His point of view is epitomized by the following quotation from *Toddlers and Parents*:

Whatever the difference, it is self-perpetuating, and I doubt that we can eradicate these subtle influences upon our handling of children in less than several generations of reconditioning. *I am not sure we want to either* [italics added], for I feel that the "fit" that a parent feels when his [sic] behavior meshes with that of a child is so rewarding that we as parents shall continue to search for and respond to subtle differences in styles and rhythms. If indeed such differences are inborn, they will continue to be nurtured. (pp. 231-232)

It is not surprising, therefore, that in *Infants and Mothers* where Brazelton gives three composite portraits of infants and their families, the "average" and "active" babies are boys while the "quiet" baby is a girl.

More recently-written books do acknowledge some of the research on sex roles, particularly those studies that show that mothers and fathers treat children differently beginning in infancy. However, while acknowledging such differential treatment, most of the books draw no conclusions concerning the possible negative effects of early indoctrination into "feminine" and "masculine" behavior.

A case in point is Caplan's *First Twelve Months of Life* in which he acknowledges that mothers stimulate baby boys more than girls during the first few months of life. He argues that this may be because boys sleep less and cry more than girls. He also notes that mothers imitate and verbalize with their baby girls more than with boys. (p. 91) However, Caplan is not concerned about the possible long-term consequences of differential treatment; indeed, he is at pains to encourage it:

A baby boy especially enjoys roughhousing with father . . . your husband gives your baby boy an extension of his own active development, plus the chance to identify with another male. Just as a little girl is beginning to sense her femininity, the baby boy begins to realize some of his masculine identity. (p. 225)

Sex-Role Stereotyping

Several of the books we reviewed do acknowledge the harmful effects of sex-role stereotyping; however, their discussion is not accompanied by any strategies for avoiding sexism in childrearing. In *Fathers*, Parke reviews a number of studies showing the differences in fathers' treatment of their sons and daughters. Both in the hospital at birth and later at home, fathers talk to and respond more to their sons than to their daughters, while they hold their daughters more closely and snugly. He concludes that this may be the earliest form of sex-role stereotyping, an expression of the father's desire to encourage his son's rather than his daughter's physical

and intellectual development. (p. 44) Elsewhere Parke cites studies showing that fathers enforce traditional sex-role behavior more strongly than mothers and that this may have negative effects particularly on the cognitive development of girls. (pp. 61-62) Indeed, the message to boys from many fathers is "do well" while to girls it is "have a good time." (p. 76)

In *Understanding Your Child from Birth to Three*, Church discusses the negative consequences of channeling children into traditional sex roles. He argues that sex roles, like other aspects of a child's behavior, are fulfillments of parental expectations.

By the logic of the self-fulfilling prophecy, many males and females grow up acting as though their sex-roles and traits had come to them via their genes, and it is all but impossible to sort out what is cultural and what is biological. (p. 145)

He also argues that society is somewhat more tolerant of girls' deviation from the sex-role norm than of boys' deviation; and he acknowledges that "our culture's definition of sex differences is in many ways arbitrary and even injurious." (p. 14) His sound advice that parents "concentrate on rearing good human beings, with a full range of intellectual and emotional resources" is, he never, never followed by any suggestions on how to undo the sexist influences from outside the family, nor how to examine one's own assumptions about "femininity" and "masculinity" in relation to the task of childrearing.

Spock goes further than Church in his discussion of sex-role stereotyping. Not only does he acknowledge the injurious effect of channeling children, but he also points to the connection between sex roles in childhood and the work that women are later assigned in our society. In explaining the revisions in his later edition, he writes:

In discussing the clothes and playthings parents buy their children and the chores they assign them, I took it for granted that there should be a deliberate distinction between boys and girls. But this early childhood differentiation begins in a small way the discriminatory sex stereotyping that ends up in women so often getting the humdrum, subordinate, poorly paid jobs in most industries and professions, and being treated as the second class sex. (p. xix)

Yet even Spock gives no clues as to what nonsexist childrearing might look like. To find this out, one must turn to the books by feminist authors: Letty Cottin Pogrebin's *Growing Up Free* and Selma Greenberg's *Right from the Start*. Both books analyze what Pogrebin and Greenberg regard as the underpinnings of sexism in our society—a male-dominated family structure in which roles are traditionally divided between the sexes. Hence both books emphasize shared parenting as key in raising children in nonsexist ways.

Pogrebin's book is encyclopedic in scope—the result of eight years of thinking and writing about nonsexist childrearing. It is based, in part, on her experiences as the mother of three children in a family in which housework and child care has been shared. Her book can be read

selectively by parents depending on their need—whether it be countering sexism in the media; selecting nonsexist toys for their children; helping adolescent children to cope with peer pressure concerning sex roles; or dividing responsibilities in the home among children and parents. This is but a small sample of the many topics which Pogrebin covers. Greenberg's book is less concerned with strategies for nonsexist childrearing than with analyzing how a patriarchal family structure perpetuates harmful and limiting sex-role stereotypes.

Sexuality

"At the heart of sex-role stereotyping is stereotypic sex . . . Sex is as central to sexism as are money and power," writes Greenberg. (p. 209) Yet with the exception of Pogrebin and Greenberg, none of the books we reviewed discuss children's perception of and feeling about their bodies, their understanding of sexuality, and the relationship between sex roles and sexuality. Pogrebin outlines an agenda for nonsexist childrearing that we feel encompasses some of the major issues concerning sexuality:

1. All children need to feel positively about their own bodies.
2. All children need to have permission to feel sexual pleasure.
3. All children need sexual knowledge that is not marred by sex-role distortions.
4. All children need protection from sexual abuse. (p. 247)

Virtually none of these areas were dealt with in the other books reviewed—even in those books seemingly committed to eliminating harmful sex-role stereotypes.

A case in point is Church's *Understanding Your Child from Birth to Three*. In his chapter on infant sexuality he includes a discussion of incest, saying:

The matter of incest becomes complicated because not only is the baby or small child a more powerful sexual stimulus than we like to admit, but the child may actively seduce the adult. . . . Thus, the molester of small children is not necessarily a depraved character who prowls about working evil on hapless victims. Probably in most cases the child molester is a relative or family friend who caved in to temptation. (p. 175) [italics added]

He explains that father/daughter incest is much more common than mother/son incest because "mothers are less easily turned-on. . . or just because little boys are somewhat unreliable sexual partners." (p. 174) This incredibly sexist analysis of incest in a book purporting to give serious attention to the elimination of sex roles is certainly significant. That incest is profoundly damaging to children and that the predominance of male offenders is related directly to the male/female power relationships within families and the larger society is ignored by Church.⁶ He leaves the reader with the impression that incest is a fairly trivial and "sexy" event; one that is rooted in biological and sex-stereotypical sexual urges.

Most of the books we reviewed did not adhere to a psychoanalytic interpretation of children's discovery of their genitals. However, the advice on educating children about genitalia is less than liberating for girls and women,

barely an improvement over the Freudian view of "missing parts." Only in the books by feminist authors were parents told to tell daughters they have a clitoris and uterus as well as a vagina. The lack of accurate information about female genitals leaves little girls mystified about what they actually possess. Most books still advise parents to explain the genitals only in terms of their function in reproduction, thus creating a taboo regarding the discussion and acknowledgment of sexual pleasure.

Pogrebin's excellent chapter on sexuality discusses such useful topics as: parental nudity, masturbation, explaining a child's genitals in positive ways, and adolescent sexuality. She also discusses at length the one question that she feels is at the heart of many parents' apprehensions about nonsexist childrearing: "Will it make my child a homosexual?" Pogrebin places herself squarely on record as not regarding homosexuality as undesirable. She also cites many studies showing that homosexuality cannot be linked to any particular form of childrearing, indeed that the causes of homosexuality are unknown. On the other hand, sexual preference is probably determined quite early and is virtually impossible to change, so that parental efforts in this direction are not only harmful but probably useless. She also discusses what she does see as an evil—homophobia, a fear of homosexuals and of becoming a homosexual. This fear she believes is one of the strongest and most malevolent enforcers of traditional sex roles. The fear that one might reveal homosexual proclivities keeps boys, especially, in the strait jacket of masculinity.⁷

How is the socioeconomic and cultural context of childrearing presented?

Race and Social Class

The world of childrearing books, with a few notable exceptions, is one of white, middle-class parents in which survival is never an issue; in which racism is nonexistent; and in which one's cultural legacy is disregarded as a formative influence on childrearing practices. Not surprisingly, the only books that pay any attention to the relationship between the family and the larger society are those written by feminists and people of color.

The books by feminist authors are concerned about larger issues such as: what it means to parent in a sexist society; how to deal with sexist messages from the media, relatives, and childrearing experts. Yet, in spite of these concerns, the books by Pogrebin and Greenberg, like the other childrearing books which we reviewed, are middle-class and white in their assumptions and examples. Both authors draw on their own experiences as parents, which while important and valid, offer little inspiration for those whose options and material conditions are different. Pogrebin's descriptions of family celebrations include visits to museums and art galleries; eating lavish lunches and dinners; splurging on plays, movies, symphonies and ballets. She describes a sixteen-year-old boy as possibly too "cool" for birthday parties but as

abnormal or pathological. (See Brazelton, *Toddlers and Parents*, p. 121.)

Disability

One would never know that one in ten children and one in five adults are disabled if one depended on information from the childrearing books we reviewed.⁸ Two exceptions are Brazelton's *On Becoming a Family*, which includes a chapter on the development of parental attachment to an infant with a disability, and the revised edition of Spock's *Baby and Child Care*, which includes a chapter on "Handicapped Children."

As a result of the disability rights movement, the elimination of "handicapped" language is regarded as a crucial stage in the struggle to overcome discrimination against disabled people. The terminology Spock uses to discuss disability indicates that he has not been exposed to this consciousness-raising. He refers to the disabled child as "handicapped," as having a "defect," as being mentally "slow," and as having a physical "deformity." Sex stereotypes are referred to as "crippling," thus reinforcing the notion that physical disability, like a sex-role stereotype, makes one into a less than full human being.

None of the books discuss the issues that might arise if parents are themselves disabled, and none take up the crucial issue of helping nondisabled children to understand disability. Children perceive people with disabilities and, of course, ask probing questions about them; their comments could and should be the jumping off points for important lessons in understanding differences. Often, however, the conscious and unconscious fears felt by parents about disability are transmitted to children, resulting in the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes about disabled people. Disability needs to be explained to nondisabled children in ways that help them to understand that differences do not signal inferiority.

The Omnipotent Parent

Most of the childrearing books continue to perpetuate the dangerous illusion that the home is a "haven in a heartless world" and that within it parents can make or break a child depending solely on how well they parent.⁹ The implication is that, no matter how different the options available to parents, they can compensate for inequities in the larger society by being "good, self-sacrificing" parents.

One result of this illusion is that parents, usually the mother, are regarded as omnipotent—the ones who should be and ultimately are responsible for the well-being and success of their child. In *The Black Parents Handbook* McLaughlin writes, "If you have kept your infant clean, he [sic] will wish to be clean. If you kept him happy, he will remain happy. If you have been too harsh, with him, he will show harshness." (p. 137) In the same vein, in *Toddlers and Parents* Brazelton writes that parents can expect to play "an undiluted role" between birth and three. (p. xii)

In all the books we read, only *Ourselves and Our Children* acknowledges that parenting is too big a job for one or two people alone. In the face of a society which has not shouldered its responsibilities toward parents and children, which expects parental nurturance to compensate for poor nutrition, and inadequate housing and child-care facilities, the authors outline a number of resources that are available within communities. They also suggest how parents can form supportive networks.

Another invaluable aspect of the book is its open acceptance of parental ambivalence. The omnipotent parent always wants to parent; is always self-sacrificing; never has a major life crisis; and does not experience ambivalence, rejection, or conflict. The authors of *Ourselves and Our Children*, the Boston Women's Health Book Collective, attempt to counter this myth of parenthood by including the voices of many parents who express a wide range of feelings about their children and about being a parent. Some common themes are: that parents feel very differently about being a parent at different points in their child's life; that changes are possible for adults and children at many different points in their lives; that given the circumstances under which parenting is done in our society, it may be an alienating experience at times—albeit one that can still be among the most richly rewarding. It is regrettable that the authors did not interview many Third World people or many parents of working-class backgrounds; their book would have been far more valuable had they done so. Nevertheless, what they have to say is encouraging to parents and helps to counter the myth of the omnipotent parent.

Is Infant-Toddler Group Care Regarded as a Potentially Optimal Form of Child Care?

Cautious Acceptance

Selma Fraiberg's book, *Every Child's Birthright*, is an attack on group care for preschool children and on feminists for advocating that women of children under five work outside their homes. She takes the women's movement to task for current day-care arrangements and argues that nothing short of one-to-one mothering will lead to healthy, well-adjusted child development.¹⁰ No other popular writer of childrearing books has blamed the women's movement so vehemently for failures in childrearing, nor so consistently denied the reality of working women's lives today.

However, in some papers written for early childhood educators and researchers, the tone is similar to that of Fraiberg. In a 1974 paper entitled "Developmental Issues in the Second Year of Life: Their Implications for Day Car Practices," Sibylle K. Escalona writes that toddlers should be in day care only when alternatives are "obviously dreadful."¹¹ In a commentary on this paper, the following assessment is made of the family

backgrounds of children who are most often found in group care:

Often the mothers are sleeping the better part of the day and the children are kept either in cribs or in a room where there is very little for them to do. When they get into things, which they're always doing, the mothers get very angry and the children may be physically chastised or shouted at. I think really, that the only appropriate time to put toddlers in day care is when you are trying to remove them from a sterile or overly repressive environment. (p. 9)

Fortunately, among the books we reviewed, there were no such intensely hostile views. However, most writers are still very cautious in their acceptance of group care for infants and toddlers.

Brazelton is in many ways a barometer for shifts in attitudes among early childhood experts. In his early books, infant care is presented as an economic necessity, and one in which both children and parents suffer. In *On Becoming a Family*, he is more concerned with the effects of group care on the parents than on the child. He argues that when very young children are placed in group care, parents generally blame themselves rather than the caregivers for anything that goes wrong. Such parents may encounter a cranky child at the end of the day and feel that they are at fault because they should be home or because they chose an incompetent center. Brazelton wisely suggests that caregivers need to reassure parents and help them understand that in these and other situations children may be reserving important feelings for their parents, a normal and to-be-expected occurrence in group care. (p. 190)

Another shift in attitude can be found from Church's *Understanding Your Child From Birth to Three* to his later *Childhood and Adolescence: A Psychology of the Growing Person* coauthored with Joseph Stone (1979). In the first book he admonishes: "If you are counting on a day-care center to play substitute mother while you work, please be aware that good day care is almost certain to be expensive. If you just want to put your child in a storage bin, then you decided wrong about having a child." (p. 235) In the later book, group care is presented as an economic necessity, and the authors concede that as more young mothers take on full-time jobs, the need for day-care centers will grow.

In his revised edition of *Baby and Child Care*, Spock's views on sex roles may have changed, but his attitude toward early group child care has not. His optimal choice is to have the work schedules of the mother and father dovetail, so that one or the other can be home for most of the day. Another solution, according to Spock, is for one or both parents to cut down their work time until the child is two or three. He clearly feels that children under two are not ready for group situations and will probably not be ready until they are three or four.

A Vision of Infant/Toddler Care as Optimal

A notable contribution to the growing literature on infant and toddler care has been made by William Fowler of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. In his

book, *Infant and Child Care: A Guide to Education in Group Settings* (1980), Fowler not only endorses group care as optimal, he emphasizes that such care has been the prevailing form of child care both in other cultures and throughout history:

The problem of separation and maternal care is something of an invented problem, in as much as vast numbers of children, including infants, have been daily separated from mothers who work throughout the world for generations . . . How children develop, in other words, depends more on the quality of care than on the setting or the fact of a single caregiver in daycare and the home. (p. xviii)

Fowler is extremely conscious of the possibilities of sex-role stereotyping in early childhood education. He advocates that both girls and boys be exposed to the full range of activities and materials, so that both sexes may acquire the skills they will need in later life. (p. 37) He feels that it is particularly important to engage boys in cooperative tasks in family living, such as setting and clearing tables, and tidying up bathrooms and playrooms. (p. 51) He notes that caregivers not only encourage boys and girls to pursue different activities, but that they also tend to talk differently with males and females. To boys, they teach the names of things and their functions; with girls, they use language for personal expression and social communication. Fowler stresses that children need both types of language development. (p. 57)

Fowler is also sensitive to the need to recognize and validate cultural differences. He writes, for example, about the importance of having staff who are of the same cultural background as the children in the child-care center. He also argues for the importance of preserving language and of helping children to become fluent and confident both in their own language and in the language of the dominant culture. He recognizes that without such validation of a child's culture, serious gaps and misunderstandings arise between home and school. It is essential, he argues, for children to see that their culture is validated not only in their homes, but also in a school setting and by caregivers whom children learn to love and trust. (pp. 55-56)

Fowler projects an exciting vision of what infant-toddler care could become in optimal situations: a place of learning and creativity for children; a place in which cultural differences are respected and validated; and a place in which serious attention is given to countering sexist and racist stereotypes.

Conclusion

For the most part, books written by what could be considered the most "popular" childrearing experts give virtually no attention to the major social issues of our day and their relationship with childrearing. There is total silence on the effects of racism on childrearing; there is no recognition of class or cultural differences among families. While most of the books we reviewed pay more

attention to discussing sex roles than class or cultural differences, the material on sex-role stereotyping is most often token and superficial. Thus, no links are made between the existence of male-dominated family structures and sexist childrearing; nor between sex-stereotypical sexuality—even in incest—and sexism in the larger society; nor between sexism in childrearing and the kinds of work women and men eventually perform in our society.

The books we reviewed not only reflect prevailing views on the family and childrearing, but also the profound cleavages within our society along sex, race, and class lines. Given these cleavages, it is not surprising that the books by feminist authors are not concerned with racism, indeed perpetuate racist assumptions by presenting white middle-class family life as a norm. Nor is it surprising that Black childrearing experts give no space to a discussion of sex-role stereotyping and even reinforce some harmful sexist myths about Black women and their sexuality. Indeed, the books we read were compartmentalized in much the same way as our universities and colleges: Women's Studies and Black Studies are ghettoized, with little interchange between

the two. The rest of the teaching and research establishment give barely a nod in the direction of these academic disciplines and the social movements from which they emerged.

There is, therefore, a need for childrearing books that would take into account the many insights of the women's movement, the Black civil rights movement, and other ethnic social change movements. We believe that such books would present a realistic portrayal of childrearing, one in which parents could gain a clearer sense of their options. The very "naming" of problems would relieve parents of guilt and, therefore, make childrearing seem more do-able and joyful. Parents *can* contribute to raising children free of sexist and racist attitudes and prejudices; we still need books that will help them to do so.

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Notes

1) This view is corroborated by two other surveys on childrearing books: John D. DeFrain, "Sexism in Parenting Manuals," *The Family Coordinator*, July 1977; *Bulletin of the Council on Interracial Books for Children* (A Special Double Issue on Parenting Books) Vol. 9, Nos. 4 & 5, 1978.

2) We have not included here the three books specifically concerned with nonsexist childrearing and the elimination of sexist language.

3) In 1979, 43.2 percent of mothers with at least one child under six, and 59.1 percent of mothers with children between the ages of six and seventeen, were in the workforce. Andrew Hacker, "Farewell to the Family?" *New York Review of Books*, March 18, 1982, p. 40.

4) By 1980, 23.4 percent of all children age 17 or under were not living with both parents. They were living with one parent, another relative, or a nonrelative. This was the situation for 17.3 percent of white children and 56.8 percent of Black children. Andrew Hacker, "Farewell to the Family?", p. 37.

5) In 1979, mothers raising two children had a median income of \$8,314. In contrast, the median income for couples with two children was \$23,000. Andrew Hacker, "Farewell to the Family?", p. 42.

6) According to Sandra Butler, *Conspiracy of Silence: The Trauma of Incest* (San Francisco, New Glide Publications,

1978), seventy-five percent of all reported sexual abuse of children is committed by someone the victim knows and trusts—usually a family member. In the vast majority of reported incestuous assaults, the offender is an adult male and the child victim is a female.

7) See Pogrebin, "Homosexuality, Hysteria and Child Care: How Not to be a Homophobic Parent," *Growing Up Free*, pp. 274-301.

8) For further statistics and a discussion of the full implications of disability, see John Gliedman and William Roth, *The Unexpected Minority: Handicapped Children in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1980). For a discussion of sexism in books about disability written for parents and teachers, see *Bulletin of the Council on Interracial Books for Children*, Vol. 13, Nos. 6 & 7, p. 9.

9) An analysis of this illusion is the subject of Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World* (New York: Basic Books, 1979).

10) Selma Fraiberg, *Every Child's Birthright: In Defense of Mothering* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

11) Sibylle K. Escalona, "Developmental Issues in the Second Year of Life: Their Implications for Day Care Practices," reprinted by Bank Street College of Education from *Psychosocial Process*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Spring 1974, p. 12.

Reprinted from Walteen Grady, "Sex-Role Stereotyping and Teen Parents," *Equal Play*, Vol. III, Nos. 3 & 4, Summer-Fall, 1982. Women's Action Alliance, Inc., 370 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017

Sex-Role Stereotyping and Teen Parents

Teen-age parents, particularly single mothers, are in a special position when their status is examined in the context of sex-role development issues. Not only are societal influences reflected in their interactions with their own children, but their perceived, and real, limited options for becoming adults may be linked to early parenthood. If a sexually desirable and active woman is perceived as the epitome of the female ideal, a young woman is more likely to seek to emulate that image than the relatively less promoted and glamorized view of woman as well-educated and mentally, physically, or artistically skilled with or without a family.

Teen parents face a multiplicity of issues which confront every parent in our society. But they live under special stress because they must deal with these issues before they have had a chance to develop a sense of themselves—their own identities, abilities, strengths, talents. While in some segments of society, awareness of the range of options that should be open to young women is higher than at any previous time in our history, for many young women, teens in particular, a growing gap exists between awareness and material means for realizing options.

The Facts

- There are 29 million young people between the ages of 13 and 19 in the United States. Twelve million of them—about seven million young men and five million young women—have had sexual intercourse by age 19. The average age of first intercourse for whites is 16.4 years, for Blacks, 15.5.

- There are over 1.1 million pregnant teen-agers. According to the Alan Guttmacher Institute, more than 1 in 10 teen-agers gets pregnant each year and if patterns persist, 4 in 10 young women will get pregnant at least once while still in their teens.

- About 5 percent of U. S. teen-agers give birth each year, a rate that is higher than any western advanced industrial society, three times higher than the Soviet Union's, and higher than the rate in such developing countries as the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Tunisia.

- The rise in the out-of-wedlock birthrate has been most steep among 15-to-17-year-old whites. Non-whites total 55 percent of all out-of-wedlock births.

- Black teen-agers are more likely than whites to have unplanned pregnancies and births. According to the National Urban League, nearly one-third of all live births to Blacks in the United States are to young women under 20 years old. The increasing number of births to Black teen-agers over the last decade is attributed to: a) the overall increase in the number of young Black unmarried women age 15 to 19, resulting in one-half million more teen-age girls who can bear children, and b) the increase in sexual activity.

Contraception

Family planning organizations such as Guttmacher conclude that more emphasis should be placed on reaching young people with information about sexuality, fertility control, and reproduction *before* they become sexually active (before puberty), and developing new, improved contraceptive methods. They admit, however, that this will not resolve the growing problem of adolescent pregnancy.

Most teen-age sexual behavior is unplanned and impulsive. Pregnancy results because of both negligence and the inability to accurately calculate the times when intercourse won't result in conception, rather than out of any conscious desire to become pregnant or ignorance of contraceptives and how to get them.

Lack of knowledge about contraception is a particular issue with

young teen parents who are more likely to have more than one pregnancy during adolescence. The whole occurrence of early teen pregnancy is a multigenerational phenomenon. The younger the mother at birth, the more likely it is that her own parents were teen-agers. One study found that 82 percent of girls who became mothers at 15 or younger had mothers who first gave birth as teen-agers. Twenty percent of teen-age fathers and 15 percent of teen mothers had a teen parent.

Education and Jobs

Most often, having babies during adolescence has a negative impact on the number of years of school both parents complete. Of the 1.1 million teen-age mothers, about 670,000 have not finished high school. Among the 18-year-old mothers, nearly 6 in 10 have not completed high school, of those who are 19, more than 4 in 10 have not received a diploma.

Teen-age parents are more likely than those who delay childbearing to have low-status, low-paying jobs or to be unemployed. In 1975 about half of the almost ten billion dollars of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) went to families in which the woman had given birth as a teen-ager. About one-fourth of teen-age mothers are currently receiving AFDC payments.

The 1980 report of the Congressional-mandated Select Panel for the Promotion of Child Health has pointed out that a job-training program in high risk areas may do as much or more to reduce adolescent pregnancy than an adolescent health clinic. At the end of such job training, however, there must be jobs, not dead-end, low-paying jobs, but work that provides stimulation and a decent living.

Although most teen-age mothers want to complete their high school education, and even get further academic or vocational training, they

are hampered by economic and child-care problems.

Child Care

Although two-thirds of births to unmarried teen-agers are unintended, unwed teen-age mothers very rarely give up their babies for adoption or for care by friends or relatives. There are about 1.3 million children now living with 1.1 million teen-age mothers; more than half of these children are living with unmarried mothers. Two-thirds were born to mothers aged 17 or younger.

Facilities, funds, and staff to provide infant day care for these children is a pressing need. Only about 43,000 such children are enrolled in day-care programs, and an estimated 480,000 are taken care of by non-working mothers, relatives, or babysitters. Most of the remaining 804,000 children are in need of day-care services because their mothers would like to work or finish high school. As a result of the unavailability of child care, many mothers are unable to complete their education or hold a job and are dependent on welfare.

Parenting

Teen mothers often see their parental roles as just one of a number of pressing concerns. Their relationships to the child's father, to their own and their child's father's parents, concerns about employment, education, child care, and housing are all very much on their minds. Effective teen parent programs must deal with the parent's need for greater independence, assertiveness, and self-esteem.

Separation and discipline are specific parenting issues which pose particular challenges to teen parents. The child is often seen as someone who will love the parent exclusively. Rather than seeing the separation process as an expression of growth and development, teen parents sometimes experience it as rejection or feel the child is being "bad." The modeling of effective behaviors these parents can observe in quality child-care settings is essential to providing skilled alternative parenting styles.

Parenthood also affects adolescent fathers. While an unexpected pregnancy is less likely to result in marriage between the parents than was

true a generation ago, adolescent fathers are very much present in the lives of the mothers of their children. Some will leave school to look for jobs to support their children, an often futile effort in an economy where the unemployment rate for Black teen-agers is over 45 percent.

Meeting the Needs of Adolescent Parents

Less than 20 percent of all teen parents are served by special programs designed to meet their needs. When teen-agers and social agency workers were surveyed about the needs of teen mothers, they identified social services such as outreach, support, legal assistance, psychological counseling, and prevention of child abuse as most major. The need for preventive health services such as contraception, abortion, and pregnancy testing was cited less often as a basic need.

Most of the current research on adolescent pregnancy focuses on the increasing rate of teen pregnancy and parenthood as a social and health issue. The issue is rarely seen in the context of broad economic and political factors like the threat of nuclear war, the rising youth unemployment rate (particularly for Black youth), the decline in the quality of public education, and assaults on civil rights efforts to ensure equality for groups which have historically experienced discrimination in U. S. society—minority people and women. A comprehensive analysis must include these dimensions of the issue as well.

To deal with sex-role stereotyping issues of teen parents, attention must be paid not only to the parents' interaction with their children but to the dynamics of the parents' own lives. The socialization process for young teens, their particular openness to images and ideas promoted in music, film, and television must be looked at closely. Full attention must be given to these factors in addition to the need for quality nonsexist, nonracist public education, the availability of jobs, and child care if the needs of teen parents are to be met.

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Gwen Braxton has been working for sex and race equity since graduating from the University of Chicago in 1967. Before joining Project BE, she worked as a field representative for the National Congress of Neighborhood Women, and earlier as coordinator of the National Black Feminist Organization and as a vocational counselor in Chicago. Currently, she is Coordinator of the Teen Agency Connection Program of the Brooklyn Teen Pregnancy Network.

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Milly Hawk Daniel has been a writer, editor, and teacher, concentrating most recently on the infant-toddler years. A graduate of Antioch College, she is completing course work in the graduate program in Infant and Parent Development at the Bank Street College of Education. She is currently Manager for Editorial Development at Girl Scouts, USA.

Merle Froschl has been working to bring about nonsexist education since 1973. During that time, she has spoken and written on a broad range of educational equity issues. She was Field-Testing Director of the Feminist Press's Women's Lives/Women's Work Project from 1975-1979, Director of the Non-Sexist Child Development Project from 1980-1982, and is currently Co-Director of Educational Equity Concepts, Inc. She graduated from Syracuse University in 1960 with a degree in journalism.

Jamila Gastón-Colón has been working on issues of nonsexist, multicultural early childhood education since graduating from Mills College in 1969. She was Director of the Che-Lumumba School in Amherst, Massachusetts, from 1977-1980, has been a classroom teacher, and has served as Project Coordinator for Embers, a multicultural basal reader series sponsored by the Council on Interracial Books for Children. She is an ED.D. candidate at the University of Massachusetts, where she earned a M.A. in 1979. Currently she is teaching fourth grade in New York City.

Walteen Grady has been a writer, editor, and consultant on issues of sex and race equity since graduating from Michigan State University in 1973. She was editor of Newsflash, newsletter of the Women's Educational Equity Act Coordination Project, U.S. Department of Education, and a Program Officer at the Educational Equity Institute, The American University, Washington, DC. Currently, she is National Coordinator of Women for Racial and Economic Equality (WREE) and is Workshop Coordinator for the Council on Interracial Books for Children.

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Sylvia Kramer was a teacher in the Great Neck, NY Public Schools for twenty-five years before becoming Executive Director of the Women's Action Alliance, Inc., in 1982. In addition to teaching, she served as a Title IX Compliance Officer and in many other equity-related capacities. She also founded Womanspace in Great Neck and has written and spoken extensively on sex equity issues. She has a B.A. degree from Queens College, an M.A. from the City University of New York, and has done considerable post-graduate work.

Judith Leipzig has worked with infant-toddler programs as a therapeutic teacher and as an early childhood specialist. She also has written articles and conducted parent discussion groups and workshops on infant-toddler development for caregivers. She graduated from C.W. Post College in 1971 and earned an M.S. in Infant and Parent Development from the Bank Street College of Education in 1981.

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Sandy Weinbaum has focused her career on sex equity issues in education. She was Editor and Coordinator of Educational Programs at the Feminist Press from 1976-1980, Sex Equity Consultant for Community School District 3, New York City, from 1980-1981, and for District 2, New York City, from 1981-1982. She has conducted workshops, lectured, and published extensively. She graduated from Smith College in 1963, earned an M.A. in History from Harvard University in 1965, and a Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1975. Currently, she is Director of Access for Women at New York City Technical College.